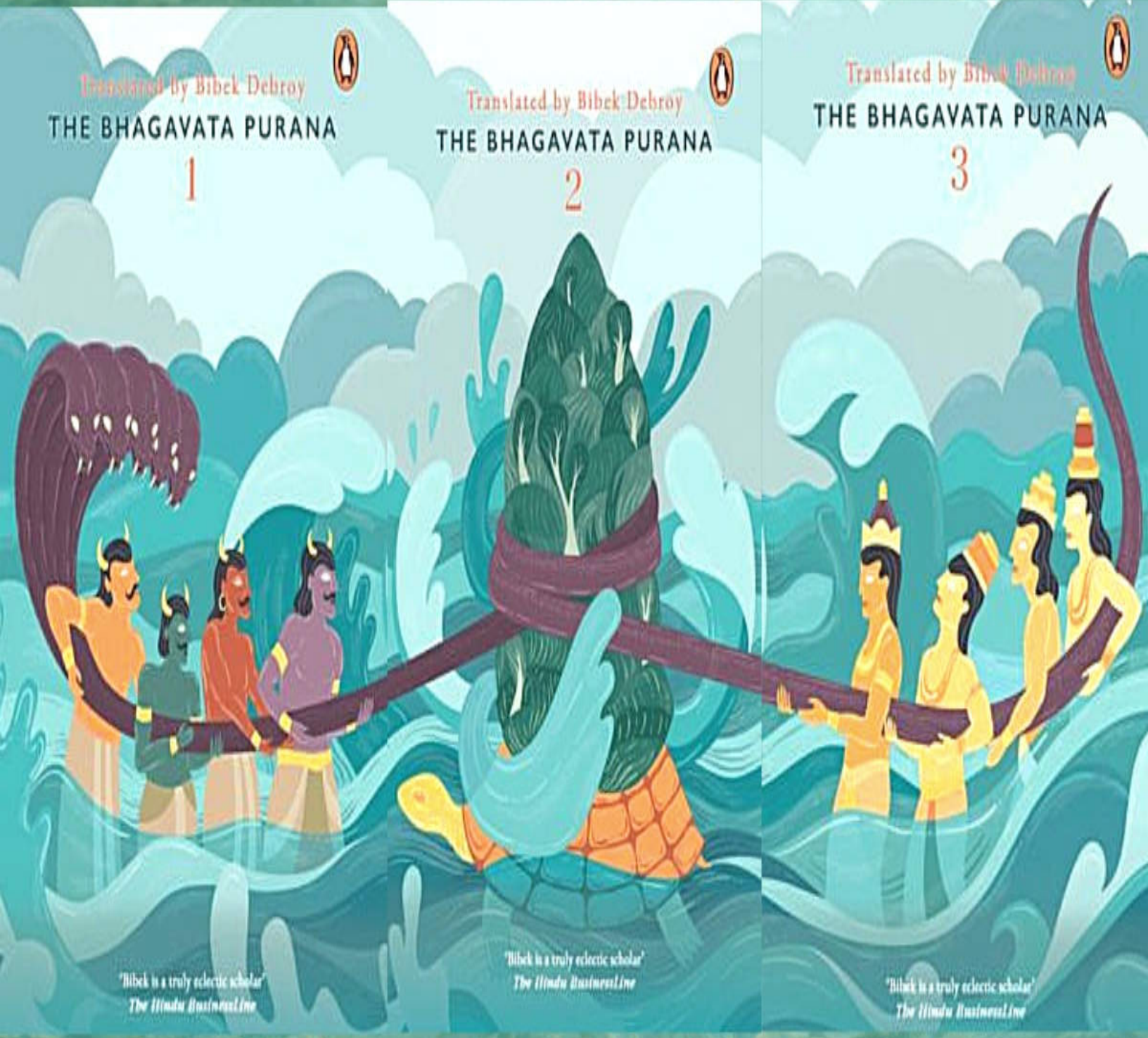
Translated by Bibek Debroy
THE BHAGAVATA PURANA
1
'Bibek is a truly eclectic scholar'
The Hindu BusinessLine
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2
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THE BHAGAVATA PURANA

1

From the master translator of the Critical Editions
of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana

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THE BHAGAVATA PURANA 1

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Bibek Debroy is a renowned economist, scholar and translator. He has worked in universities, research institutes, industry and for the government. He has widely published books, papers and articles on economics. As a translator, he is best known for his magnificent rendition of the Mahabharata in ten volumes, the three-volume translation of the Valmiki Ramayana and additionally the *Harivamsha*, published to wide acclaim by Penguin Classics. He is also the author of *Sarama and Her Children*, which splices his interest in Hinduism with his love for dogs.

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For Yudhistir Govinda Das

Introduction

The word '*purana*' means old, ancient. The Puranas are old texts, usually referred to in conjunction with Itihasa (the Ramayana and the Mahabharata). [1] Whether Itihasa originally meant only the Mahabharata—with the Ramayana being added to that expression later—is a proposition on which there has been some discussion. But that's not relevant for our purposes. In the Chandogya Upanishad, there is an instance of the sage Narada approaching the sage Sanatkumara for instruction. When asked about what he already knew, Narada says he knows Itihasa and Purana, the Fifth Veda. [2] In other words, Itihasa–Purana possessed an elevated status. This by no means implies that the word 'purana', as used in these two Upanishads and other texts too, is to be understood in the sense of the word being applied to a set of texts known as the Puranas today. The Valmiki Ramayana is believed to have been composed by Valmiki and the Mahabharata by Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa. After composing the Mahabharata, Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa is believed to have composed the Puranas. The use of the word 'composed' immediately indicates that Itihasa–Purana are *smriti* texts, with a human origin. They are not *shruti* texts, with a divine origin. Composition does not mean these texts were rendered into writing. Instead, there was a process of oral narration, with inevitable noise in the transmission and distribution process. Writing came much later.

Frederick Eden Pargiter's book on the Puranas is still one of the best introductions to this corpus. [3] To explain the composition and transmission process, one can do no better than to quote him:

> The Vayu and Padma Puranas tell us how ancient genealogies, tales and ballads were preserved, namely, by the *sutas*, [4] and they describe the suta's duty . . . The Vayu, Brahmanda and Visnu give an account, how the original Purana came into

> existence . . . Those three Puranas say— Krsna Dvaipayana divided the single Veda into four and arranged them, and so was called Vyasa. He entrusted them to his four disciples, one to each, namely Paila, Vaisampayana, Jaimini and Sumantu. Then with tales, anecdotes, songs and lore that had come down from the ages he compiled a Purana, and taught it and the Itihasa to his fifth disciple, the suta Romaharsana or Lomaharsana . . . After that he composed the Mahabharata. The epic itself implies that the Purana preceded it . . . As explained above, the sutas had from remote times preserved the genealogies of gods, *rishi*s and kings, and traditions and ballads about celebrated men, that is, exactly the material—tales, songs and ancient lore—out of which the Purana was constructed. Whether or not Vyasa composed the original Purana or superintended its compilation, is immaterial for the present purpose . . . After the original Purana was composed, by Vyasa as is said, his disciple Romaharsana taught it to his son Ugrashravas, and Ugrashravas the *souti* [5] appears as the reciter in some of the present Puranas; and the sutas still retained the right to recite it for their livelihood. But, as stated above, Romaharsana taught it to his six disciples, at least five of whom were brahmans. It thus passed into the hands of brahmans, and their appropriation and development of it increased in the course of time, as the Purana grew into many Puranas, as Sanskrit learning became peculiarly the province of the brahmans, and as new and frankly sectarian Puranas were composed.

Pargiter cited reasons for his belief that the Mahabharata was composed after the original Purana, though that runs contrary to the popular perception about the Mahabharata having been composed before the Puranas. That popular and linear perception is too simplistic, since texts evolved parallelly, not necessarily sequentially.

In popular perception, Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa composed the Mahabharata. He then composed the Puranas. Alternatively, he composed an original core Purana text, which has been lost, and others embellished it through additions. The adjective ‘purana’, meaning old account or old text, became a proper noun, signifying a specific text. To be classified as a Purana, a Purana has to possess five attributes—*pancha lakshmana*. That is, five topics must be discussed—*sarga*, *pratisarga*, *vamsha*, *manvantara* and *vamshanucharita*. The clearest statement of this is in the Matsya Purana. A text like the Bhagavata Purana also mentions these five attributes, but adds another five, making it a total of ten. Unlike the Ramayana and the Mahab-

harata, there is no Critical Edition of the Puranas. [6] Therefore, citing chapter and verse from a Purana text is somewhat more difficult, since verse, if not chapter, may vary from text to text. With that caveat, the relevant shloka (verse) should be in the fifty-third chapter of the Matysa Purana. Sarga means the original or primary creation. The converse of sarga is universal destruction, or *pralaya*. That period of sarga lasts for one of Brahma's days, known as *kalpa*. When Brahma sleeps, during his night, there is universal destruction.

In measuring time, there is the notion of a *yuga* (era) and there are four yugas—*satya yuga* (also known as *krita yuga*), *treta yuga*, *dvapara yuga* and *kali yuga*. Satya yuga lasts for 4,000 years, treta yuga for 3,000 years, dvapara yuga for 2,000 years and kali yuga for 1,000 years. However, all these are not human years. The gods have a different timescale and these are the years of the gods. As one progressively moves from satya yuga to kali yuga, virtue (*dharma*) declines. But at the end of kali yuga, the cycle begins afresh, with satya yuga. An entire cycle, from satya yuga to kali yuga, is known as a *mahayuga* (great era). However, a mahayuga is not just 10,000 years. There is a further complication. At the beginning and the end of every yuga, there are some additional years. These additional years are 400 for satya yuga, 300 for treta yuga, 200 for dvapara yuga and 100 for kali yuga. A mahayuga thus has 12,000 years, adding years both at the beginning and at the end. One thousand mahayugas make up one kalpa. A kalpa is also divided into fourteen manvantaras, a manvantara being a period during which a Manu presides and rules over creation. Therefore, there are 71.4 mahayugas in a manvantara. Our present kalpa is known as the Shveta Varaha Kalpa. Within that, six Manus have come and gone. Their names are (1) Svayambhuva Manu, (2) Svarochisha Manu, (3) Uttama Manu, (4) Tapasa Manu, (5) Raivata Manu and (6) Chakshusha Manu. The present Manu is known as Vaivasvata Manu. Vivasvat, also written as Vivasvan, is the name of Surya, the sun god. Vaivasvata Manu has that name because he is Surya's son. Not only the Manus, but the gods, the ruler of the gods and the seven great sages, known as the *saptarshi*s (seven rishis), change from one manvantara to another. Indra is a title of the ruler of the

gods. It is not a proper name. The present Indra is Purandara. However, in a different manvantara, someone else will hold the title. In the present seventh manvantara, known as Vaivasvata manvantara, there will also be 71.4 mahayugas. We are in the twenty-eighth of these. Since a different Vedavyasa performs that task of classifying and collating the Vedas in every mahayuga, Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa is the twenty-eighth in that series. Just so that it is clear, Vedavyasa isn't a proper name. It is a title conferred on someone who collates and classifies the Vedas. There have been twenty-seven who have held the title of Vedavyasa before Krishna Dvaipayana and he is the twenty-eighth. His proper name is Krishna Dvaipayana —Krishna because he was dark and Dvaipayna because he was born on an island (*dvipa*). This gives us an idea of what the topic of manvantara is. This still leaves pratisarga, vamsha and vamshanucharita. The two famous dynasties/lineages were the solar dynasty (*surya vamsha*) and lunar dynasty (*chandra vamsha*) and all the famous kings belonged to one or other of these two dynasties. Vamshanucharita is about these lineages and the conduct of these kings. There were the gods and sages (rishis) too, not always born through a process of physical procreation. Their lineages are described under the heading of vamsha. Finally, within that cycle of primary creation and destruction, there are smaller and secondary cycles of creation and destruction. That's the domain of pratisarga. In greater or lesser degree, all the Puranas cover these five topics, some more than the others.

There are Puranas, and there are Puranas. Some are known as Sthala Puranas, describing the greatness and sanctity of a specific geographical place. Some are known as Upa-Puranas, minor Puranas. The listing of Upa-Puranas has regional variations and there is no countrywide consensus about the list of Upa-Puranas, though it is often accepted that there are eighteen of them. The Puranas we have in mind are known as Maha-Puranas, major Puranas. Henceforth, when we use the word Puranas, we mean Maha-Puranas. There is consensus that there are eighteen Maha-Puranas, though it is not obvious that this number of eighteen existed right from the beginning. The names are mentioned in several of these texts, including a shloka that follows the shloka cited from the Matsya Purana. The listing is also included

in the last sections of the Bhagavata Purana itself. Thus, the eighteen Puranas are (1) Agni (15,400); (2) Bhagavata (18,000); (3) Brahma (10,000); (4) Brahmanda (12,000); (5) Brahmavaivarta (18,000); (6) Garuda (19,000); (7) Kurma (17,000); (8) Linga (11,000); (9) Markandeya (9,000); (10) Matsya (14,000); (11) Narada (25,000); (12) Padma (55,000); (13) Shiva (24,000); (14) Skanda (81,100); (15) Vamana (10,000); (16) Varaha (24,000); (17) Vayu (24,000) and (18) Vishnu (23,000). A few additional points about this list. First, the Harivamsha is sometimes loosely described as a Purana, but strictly speaking, it is not a Purana. It is more like an addendum to the Mahabharata. Second, Bhavishya (14,500) is sometimes mentioned, with Vayu excised from the list. However, the Vayu Purana exhibits many more Purana characteristics than the Bhavishya Purana does. There are references to a Bhavishyat Purana that existed, but that may not necessarily be the Bhavishya Purana as we know it today. That's true of some other Puranas too. Texts have been completely restructured hundreds of years later. Third, it is not just a question of Bhavishya Purana and Vayu Purana. In the lists given in some Puranas, Vayu is part of the eighteen, but Agni is knocked out. In some others, Narasimha and Vayu are included, but Brahmanda and Garuda are knocked out. Fourth, when a list is given, the order also indicates some notion of priority or importance. Since that varies from text to text, our listing is simply alphabetical, according to the English alphabet.

The numbers within brackets indicate the number of shlokas each of these Puranas has, or is believed to have. The range is from 10,000 in Brahma to a mammoth 81,100 in Skanda. The aggregate is a colossal 409,500 shlokas. To convey a rough idea of the orders of magnitude, the Mahabharata has, or is believed to have, 100,000 shlokas. It's a bit difficult to convert a shloka into word counts in English, especially because Sanskrit words have a slightly different structure. However, as a very crude approximation, one shloka is roughly twenty words. Thus, 100,000 shlokas become two million words and 400,000 shlokas, four times the size of the Mahabharata, amounts to eight million words. There is a reason for using the expression 'is believed to have', as opposed to 'has'. Rendering into writing is of later

vintage, the initial process was one of oral transmission. In the process, many texts have been lost, or are retained in imperfect condition. This is true of texts in general and is also specifically true of Itihasa and Puranas. The Critical Edition of the Mahabharata, mentioned earlier, no longer possesses 100,000 shlokas. Including the Harivamsha, there are around 80,000 shlokas. The Critical Edition of the Mahabharata has of course deliberately excised some shlokas. For the Puranas, there is no counterpart of Critical Editions. However, whichever edition of the Puranas one chooses, the number of shlokas in that specific Purana will be smaller than the numbers given above. Either those many shlokas did not originally exist, or they have been lost. This is the right place to mention that a reading of the Puranas assumes a basic degree of familiarity with the Valmiki Ramayana and the Mahabharata, more the latter than the former. Without that familiarity, one will often fail to appreciate the context completely. Specifically for the Bhagavata Purana, more than passing familiarity with the Bhagavad Gita—strictly speaking, a part of the Mahabharata—helps. [7]

Other than the five attributes, the Puranas have a considerable amount of information on geography and even geological changes (changes in courses of rivers) and astronomy. Therefore, those five attributes shouldn't suggest the Puranas have nothing more. They do, and they have therefore been described as encyclopedias. Bharatavarsha is vast and heterogeneous and each Purana may very well have originated in one particular part of the country. Accordingly, within that broad compass of an overall geographical description, the extent of geographical information varies from Purana to Purana. Some are more familiar with one part of the country than with another. Though not explicitly mentioned in the five attributes, the Puranas are also about pursuing dharma, *artha, kama* and *moksha*, the four objectives of human existence, and are about the four *varna*s and the four *ashrama*s. The general understanding and practice of dharma is based much more on the Puranas than on the Vedas. Culture, notions of law, rituals, architecture and iconography are based on the Puranas. There is beautiful poetry too, included in parts of the Bhagavata Purana.

Perhaps one should mention that there are two ways these eighteen Puranas are classified. The trinity has Brahma as the creator, Vishnu as the preserver and Shiva as the destroyer. Therefore, Puranas where creation themes feature prominently are identified with Brahma (Brahma, Brahmanda, Brahmavaivarta, Markandeya). Puranas where Vishnu features prominently are identified as Vaishnava Puranas (Bhagavata, Garuda, Kurma, Matsya, Narada, Padma, Vamana, Varaha, Vishnu). Puranas where Shiva features prominently are identified as Shaiva Puranas (Agni, Linga, Shiva, Skanda, Vayu). While there is a grain of truth in this, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva are all important and all three feature in every Purana. Therefore, beyond the relative superiority of Vishnu vis-à-vis Shiva, the taxonomy probably doesn't serve much purpose. The second classification is even more tenuous and is based on the three *guna*s of *sattva* (purity), *rajas* (passion) and *tamas* (ignorance). For example, the Uttara Khanda of the Padma Purana has a few shlokas along these lines, recited by Shiva to Parvati. With a caveat similar to the one mentioned earlier, this should be in the 236th chapter of Uttara Khanda. According to this, the Puranas characterized by sattva are Bhagavata, Garuda, Narada, Padma, Varaha and Vishnu. Those characterized by rajas are Bhavishya, Brahma, Brahmanda, Brahmavaivarta, Markandeya and Vamana, Those characterized by tamas are Agni, Kurma, Linga, Matsya, Skanda and Shiva.

Within a specific Purana text, there are earlier sections, as well as later ones. That makes it difficult to date a Purana, except as a range. Across Purana texts, there are older Puranas, as well as later ones. Extremely speculatively, the dating will be something like the following. (1) Agni (800–1100 CE); (2) Bhagavata (500–1000 CE); (3) Brahma (700–1500 CE); (4) Brahmanda (400–600 CE); (5) Brahmavaivarta (700–1500 CE); (6) Garuda (800–1100 CE); (7) Kurma (600–900 CE); (8) Linga (500–1000 CE); (9) Markandeya (250–700 CE); (10) Matsya (200–500 CE); (11) Narada (900–1600 CE); (12) Padma (400–1600 CE); (13) Shiva (1000–1400 CE); (14) Skanda (600–1200 CE); (15) Vamana (450–900 CE); (16) Varaha (1000–1200 CE); (17) Vayu (350–550 CE); (18) Vishnu (300 BCE to 450 CE); and

(19) Bhavishya (500–1900 CE). Reiterating once again that there is no great precision in these ranges, by this reckoning, the Vishnu Purana is the oldest and some parts of the Bhavishya Purana are as recent as the nineteenth century.

As mentioned earlier, there is no Critical Edition for the Puranas. Therefore, one has to choose a Sanskrit text one is going to translate from. If one is going to translate all the Puranas, it is preferable, though not essential, that one opts for a common source for all the Purana texts. The common source for the Bhagavata Purana, and the subsequent Purana translations, is the one brought out by Nag Publishers, with funding from the ministry of human resource development. [8] A transliterated Sanskrit text is available through the University of Gottingen. [9] In Devanagari, the text is available at https://sanskritdocuments.org/doc_purana/bhagpur.html?lang=sa, with the transliterated Sanskrit text at http://www.sanskritweb.net/sansdocs/bhagpur.pdf. The Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies at the University of Oxford has a lot of useful resources under the umbrella of the Bhagavata Purana Research Project. [10] Among other things, this research project has published a book that is a bit like an abridged translation of the Bhagavata Purana. [11] The Bhagavata Purana is divided into twelve *skandha*s. The word skandha means trunk, or largish branch. In this context, it means section or segment. Out of these twelve skandhas, the tenth is the longest and is also the most read. Therefore, there are translations of the Bhagavata Purana that are limited to only the Tenth Skandha. Edwin Bryant's rendering of the Tenth Skandha is almost like such a translation. [12] For the entire Bhagavata Purana, there are unabridged translations in Indian languages. However, to the best of my knowledge, there are only five unabridged translations in English: (1) Manmatha Nath Dutt; [13] (2) Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada; [14] (3) Ganesh Vasudeo Tagare; [15] (4) Swami Tapasyananda; [16] and (5) C.L. Goswami and M.A. Shastri. [17] In 1901, Purnendu Narayana Sinha published a version that was close to a translation, but fell just short because it followed the path of retelling. [18] The Sanskrit texts used in these five translations vary a bit and the one used in this translation also varies a bit from the ones used in these

five. The Bhagavata Purana is believed to have 18,000 shlokas. The table below shows what this particular Sanskrit version has: just over 14,000 spread across 335 chapters. One should not jump to the conclusion that a large number of shlokas are missing. A few are indeed missing. But sometimes, it is also a question of how one counts a shloka. With the content remaining identical, the text may be counted as one shloka in one place and as two shlokas elsewhere. Our numbering is exactly the same as in the Sanskrit text we have followed. Hence, even though there may be no difference in content between our version of the text and, say, that used by Swami Prabhupada, the numbering will vary a bit. (Sometimes, there are minor differences in the Sanskrit text though.) However, there are some shlokas that are indeed missing and Ganesh Vasudeo Tagare is a good source for translations of these missing shlokas, because those missing shlokas have been separately translated there. When we have enumerated all the chapters, there are two identifying numbers that have been provided. The first number refers to the skandha, the second to the number of the chapter within the skandha. Thus, Chapter 4(30) will be the thirtieth chapter in the fourth skandha.

Skandha	*Number of chapters*	*Number of shlokas*
1	19	811
2	10	391
3	33	1412
4	31	1450
5	26	738
6	19	855
7	15	752
8	24	929
9	24	962
10	90	3948
11	31	1360
12	13	564
Total	335	14172

In the translations of the Bhagavad Gita, the Mahabharata, the Harivamsha and the Valmiki Ramayana, we followed the principle of not using diacritical marks. The use of diacritical marks (effectively the international alphabet of Sanskrit transliteration) makes the pronunciation and rendering more accurate, but also tends to put off readers who are less academically inclined. Since diacritical marks are not being used, there is a challenge of rendering Sanskrit names in English. Sanskrit is a phonetic language and we have used that principle as a basis. Applied consistently, this means that words are rendered in ways that may seem unfamiliar. Hence, the name of the jewel, often written as Kaustubha, will appear as Koustubha here. This is true of proper names, and, in a few rare cases, of geographical names. The absence of diacritical marks causes some minor problems. How does one distinguish Vasudeva Krishna from Krishna's father, Vasudeva? Often, the context will make the difference clear. If not, we have written the son as Vaasudeva and the father as Vasudeva. In translating, the attempt has been

to provide a word-for-word translation, so that if one were to hold up the Sanskrit text, there would be a perfect match.

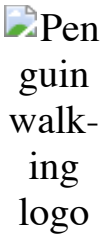
The intention is also to offer a translation, not an interpretation. That sounds like a simple principle to adopt, and for the most part, is easy to follow. However, there is a thin dividing line between translation and interpretation. In some instances, it is impossible to translate without bringing in a little bit of interpretation. Inevitably, interpretation is subjective. We have tried to minimize the problem by (a) reducing interpretation; (b) relegating interpretation to footnotes and (c) when there are alternative interpretations, pointing this out to the reader through those footnotes. If a Purana text is just about the five attributes mentioned, the task isn't that difficult. Take the Bhagavata Purana as an example. In Chapter 2(10), we are told about the ten characteristics of the Bhagavata Purana and these are sarga*, visarga, sthana, poshana, uti,* manvantara*, isha-anukatha, nirodha*, *mukti* and *ashraya*. These are (1) gross creation; (2) subtle creation; (3) preservation; (4) sustenance; (5) the addiction to the senses; (6) manvantaras; (7) accounts of the lord; (8) withdrawal; (9) liberation and (10) the ultimate refuge. Therefore, the text has much more than the five attributes cited. The word '*bhagavat*' means the divine one, the illustrious one, the fortunate one, the prosperous one, the blessed one, the sacred one, the holy one. We are often more familiar with the nominative form, *bhagavaan*. Bhagavat/Bhagavaan occur frequently in our text and I have translated the word as 'the illustrious one'. Since this is a Purana devoted to Vishnu, Bhagavat/Bhagavaan typically means Vishnu. But the text is not called Bhagavata Purana; it is in fact called Bhaagavata Purana. What does the word Bhaagavata mean? Taken as an adjective, the word means sacred and Bhaagavata Purana is simply the sacred Purana, a perfectly acceptable meaning. However, taken as a noun, Bhaagavata means a devotee or worshipper of Vishnu—and *bhaagavata dharma* is the dharma of devotion towards Vishnu. Therefore, Bhaagavata Purana is the text that describes this bhaagavata dharma that Vishnu devotees follow.

Hence, it isn't only about stories. As mentioned earlier, the longest skandha, the tenth, is also the most popular and is read most often. This par-

ticular skandha describes Krishna's exploits and pastimes. This includes *rasa lila* and this skandha has some exquisite poetry. The song of the *gopi*s is an example of this. As is thus obvious, this skandha has its fair share of stories. But in the other skandhas, the emphasis is more on dharma and moksha and a mix of *bhakti* (devotion), *advaita* (monism), *dvaita* (dualism), *samkhya* and *yoga*, [19] with notions of *avatara*s (Vishnu's incarnations) brought in. There is the influence of *pancharatra* doctrines and texts. Literally, the term pancharatra means five nights, and is a reference to five nights over which sacrifices were performed. However, there were pancharatra doctrines too and these developed a metaphysical philosophy. If we so wish, we can call it a theology. Vaishnava dharma integrated this pancharatra tradition with the other strands that have just been mentioned. Since this is a synthesis of many different strands, there are bound to be nuances and different schools. What does the Bhagavata Purana teach? What is its philosophy? Beyond the obvious tenet of devotion to Vishnu and emphasis on bhakti yoga, this is extremely difficult to answer. As a text that builds a theology, the Bhagavata Purana is much more complicated than the Bhagavad Gita. Indeed, one could say it builds extensively on that Bhagavad Gita foundation. Down the years, there have been several commentaries on and interpretations of the Bhagavata Purana. Depending on the language and the timeline for beginning and ending the cut-off, there must be at least two hundred such commentaries and interpretations. Which of these schools or interpretations should one follow? Should one take cognizance of other possible interpretations? In principle, this dilemma can exist in the course of translating any Purana. But in no other Purana is it as serious, because no other Purana devotes such a large percentage of shlokas to philosophy.

The choice in this translation is conscious and is driven by the objective and the target audience. The target audience is the ordinary reader who desires a faithful rendering of the Sanskrit text. The target reader isn't the academic who desires something like a survey of literature. Nor is the target reader a devotee of one particular Vaishnava school. To state it a bit more explicitly, Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, Swami Tapasyananda and C.L. Goswami and M.A. Shastri follow one particular line of commentary

or interpretation or school. From an academic's perspective, Ganesh Vasudeo Tagare is the best. His translation also includes an excellent introduction and a detailed note on several different commentators of the Bhagavata Purana, certainly covering the major ones. However, apart from the language of the Tagare rendition not being very smooth, that edition is also layered with complexities which can deter the ordinary reader. On the other hand, I have consciously done what is akin to a contemporary Manmatha Nath Dutt translation. Without distorting, I have chosen the simplest possible interpretation or translation that fits. In a few minor instances, this meant choosing an interpretation that was marginally different from those chosen by these preceding translators. It is possible to criticize the avoidance of complexities, but it is a conscious choice and the dissatisfied reader can always go on to read more copious commentaries and annotations. There is plenty in the Bhagavata Purana to immerse oneself in and this translation is not meant to be the final item on that reading list. It can at best be the first.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First Skandha

Chapter 1(1): 23 shlokas
Chapter 1(2): 34 shlokas
Chapter 1(3): 44 shlokas
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Chapter 1(6): 39 shlokas
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Chapter 1(8): 52 shlokas
Chapter 1(9): 49 shlokas
Chapter 1(10): 36 shlokas
Chapter 1(11): 39 shlokas
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Chapter 1(13): 60 shlokas
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Chapter 1(17): 45 shlokas
Chapter 1(18): 50 shlokas
Chapter 1(19): 40 shlokas

Chapter 1(1)

Creation and everything else [1] flow from him. Directly, and indirectly, he knows of all the objectives. He rules over himself. He is the one who filled the heart of Brahma, [2] the original wise being. The gods are bemused by him. He is like the interaction between energy, water and earth. He is the

certain cause behind the three types of creation. [3] He is always his own refuge. He is the one who casts out illusion. He is the absolute truth. We meditate on him. [4] This illustrious Bhagavata [5] was composed by the great sage. [6] It is about supreme *dharma* and is completely free from deceit. It is for the virtuous who are devoid of envy. Knowledge exists here about true reality and bliss and about uprooting the three kinds of misery. [7] What else is needed to obtain the lord? If a person has cleansed his soul and is faithful, through this, he instantly establishes him in his heart. The sacred texts are like trees that yield all the objects of desire and this represents their ripened fruit. It emerged from Shuka's mouth, with the pulp and juice of *amrita*. Drink the Bhagavata, the store of juices. O those who possess taste! Savour it repeatedly and become happy on earth.

In Naimisha, the open ground, [8] Shounaka and the other *rishi*s assembled to perform a sacrifice that lasted one thousand years, with the objective of attaining the world of heaven. On one occasion, the sages lit a fire and offered the morning oblations. Suta [9] was seated. They honoured him and started to ask him about these things. 'O unblemished one! You have indeed studied the Puranas, the Itihasas, [10] the Dharmashastras and everything that has been said and have also explained them. The illustrious Badarayana [11] is supreme among those who know about the Vedas. O Suta! There are other sages who possess knowledge about the near and the distant. [12] O amiable one! Through his [13] favours, you know everything about the truth. Preceptors tell their gentle disciples everything, even if it happens to be a secret. O one with a long life! Thus, you have determined what will bring certain benefit to people. Therefore, you should instruct us about this. In this *kali yuga*, [14] people generally possess limited lifespans. They are wicked, with evil intelligence, unfortunate and suffering. There are many kinds of diverse rites, with their respective divisions, that deserve to be heard. O virtuous one! Therefore, use your intelligence to distil out their gist. Then tell us fortunate beings, so that our souls are extremely gratified. O Suta! O fortunate one! You know why the illustrious lord of the Satvatas [15] desired to be born through Devaki and Vasudeva. His descent [16] was for the benefit and welfare of beings. We are faithful and you should tell us about all the details

that have been described. A person may be immersed in this cycle of birth and death and so helpless and distressed that Fear is itself scared of him. However, if he chants his name, he is instantly freed. The waters of the heavenly river [17] sanctify only when the waters are repeatedly touched and used. O Suta! However, sages who have served at his feet and have purified themselves can instantly sanctify others. [18] The auspicious deeds of the illustrious one are worshipped through these shlokas. Is there anyone, desiring to purify himself from the blemishes of *kali*, who does not want to listen to his fame? The gods chant his pervasive deeds. He assumes various forms in sport. Recount those to us, the faithful ones. O intelligent one! Therefore, recount to us the auspicious tale of Hari's descent. As he wishes, he resorts to his own *maya* [19] and engages in his sport. Hearing about his valour in these excellent shlokas, we are never satiated. Those who have a taste for it find it savoury at every step. [20] Indeed, Keshava performed his deeds of valour with Rama. [21] The illustrious one is superhuman. But he concealed this by hiding himself in the form of a man. Having known that kali has arrived, we have assembled here, in Vishnu's ground, to engage in this long sacrifice. There is time to hear about Hari's account. Kali destroys good qualities in men. It is like an ocean that is extremely difficult to cross and we desire to cross it. The creator has indicated that you are like our helmsman. Krishna, the lord of *yoga*, has followed the path of the *brahman* [22] and of dharma and has now departed for his own abode. Tell us. Where else will dharma go for a refuge?'

Chapter 1(2)

When he was respectfully asked by the *brahmana*s, Romaharshana's son was delighted. He honoured their words and started to speak.

Suta said, 'I bow down before the sage who is present in the hearts of all beings. [23] He left on his exile, without the sacred thread ceremony having been performed. Miserable at being separated from him, Dvaipayana called out, "My son!" Only the trees answered back. I seek refuge in Vyasa's son,

the preceptor of all the sages. Through his own experiences he distilled the single essence of all the sacred texts. It is the lamp of *adhyatma*. [24] Out of compassion for those who were blind in this cycle of life, he revealed this secret Purana. Jaya should be recited after bowing down to Narayana, Nara, supreme among men, the goddess Sarasvati and Vyasa. [25] O sages! Following virtue, you have asked me about the welfare of the world and also asked me about what Krishna did. Such questions completely please the soul. The supreme dharma for men is in devotion to Adhokshaja. [26] For the soul to be completely pleased, this must be without motive and without interruption. Through the yoga of devotion [27] to the illustrious Vasudeva, non-attachment and knowledge that is without motives are instantly generated. A man may be engaged in his own acts of dharma. However, if these do not generate a liking for Vishvaksena's [28] accounts, they are nothing more than exertion. Dharma is for liberation. Artha has not been thought of as its objective. It has been said that someone who is devoted to dharma should not use artha for the gratification of kama. Kama should not be used to please the senses, obtaining the bit necessary to sustain life is sufficient. The purpose of life is to ask about the truth. The objective of deeds is nothing but this. Those who know about the truth speak of this as knowledge without duality and this is expressed in words as brahman, *paramatman* or *bhagavan*. Devoted sages who possess knowledge and non-attachment faithfully imbibe the sacred texts and behold the *atman* in their own souls. O best among the brahmanas! Therefore, for men, the best way to satisfy Hari is to properly base themselves on their own dharma, according to the divisions of *varna* and ashrama. [29] Therefore, single-mindedly, one must hear about the illustrious lord of the Satvatas, praise him, meditate on him and always worship him. Learned and self-controlled ones can use this sword to sever the knots in the bondage of action. Thus, who will not like to hear about his account? O brahmanas! Faithfully serving those who like to hear about Vasudeva's account is a greater service than frequenting sacred *tirtha*s. [30] The hearing and the recital of Krishna's deeds is sacred. Krishna is affectionate towards the virtuous. He remains in the hearts of those who wish to hear about his account and wards off all evil. In general, by serving Bhagavata, [31] all wicked-

ness is generally destroyed. The excellent shlokas of the Bhagavata result in faithful devotion. One is then pleased and established in the quality of sattva. One is not disturbed by the qualities of rajas or tamas, desire, avarice and other similar sentiments. Hence, one is pleased in one's mind and follows the yoga of devotion towards the illustrious one. Knowledge of the truth about the illustrious one leads to freedom from attachment. The knots in the heart [32] are severed and all doubts are dispelled. When one sees the lord in one's atman, all *karma* is destroyed. That is the reason wise ones always find great delight in devotion to the illustrious Vasudeva, thus pleasing their own selves. Sattva, rajas and tamas are the natural qualities of *prakriti*. [33] Though the supreme *purusha* is actually one, for the sake of the material world, he is united with these qualities and bases himself in forms like Hari, Virinchi and Hara. [34] Indeed, men obtain the best benefit from the quality of sattva. [35] Wood results from the earth, but smoke is superior to wood. The three kinds of fire are superior to the smoke. [36] Similarly, rajas is better than tamas. But because one can realize the brahman through it, sattva is the best. Hence, earlier, all the sages served the illustrious Adhokshaja, who is pure sattva. In this world, those who seek to follow them obtain welfare. Those who desire liberation abandon the terrible forms of the lords of the demons. [37] Free from malice, they worship the peaceful forms of Narayana. Those whose natures have rajas and tamas worship those who are similar in conduct, such as the ancestors, the bhutas and other lords of beings. They do this because they desire prosperity, wealth and offspring. Vasudeva is the supreme form of the Vedas. Vasudeva is the supreme form of sacrifices. Vasudeva is the supreme form of yoga. Vasudeva is the supreme form of rituals. Vasudeva is the supreme form of knowledge. Vasudeva is the supreme form of austerities. Vasudeva is the supreme form of dharma. Vasudeva is the supreme form of all objectives. Using his own maya, at the beginning of this creation, the illustrious lord created the forms of existence and non-existence [38] and the possession of qualities and lack of qualities. [39] He entered into the functioning of these qualities and seemed to assume qualities. In their midst, he seemed to possess attributes. However, he can only be comprehended through self-knowledge. [40] He is like fire hidden in wood. Pu-

rusha is one. He is the atman of the universe and is the source of all creation. He assumes different forms in beings. [41] Through his own creation, he enters these forms with attributes of qualities. In subtle form, he is in beings, in their senses and their atmans. He enjoys those attributes in the beings. Thus, the creator of the worlds thought of creatures and the worlds, the gods, the inferior species and men. In his sport, he assumes different kinds of avataras.'

Chapter 1(3)

Suta said, 'In the beginning, desiring to create the worlds, the illustrious one assumed the form of Purusha. He created sixteen different *kala*s, [42] Mahat [43] and the others. The extensive one was lying down in the waters, in his sleep of yoga. A lotus sprouted from his navel and Brahma, the lord of all the creators of the universe [44] was born from this lotus. It is thought that the worlds are spread out, established on his body. The illustrious one's form is extremely pure, excellent with sattva. Those whose eyes are full of knowledge can see that wonderful form—with thousands of legs, thighs, arms and faces. There are thousands of heads, ears, eyes and noses. There are thousands of glittering diadems, garments and earrings. This is the source of the descents. [45] This is the seed without decay. Gods, inferior species and humans are created from the parts and sub-parts of this. At first, the god resorted to creation in the form of the Kumaras. [46] They were brahmanas and performed extremely difficult austerities, not deviating from *brahmacharya*. [47] The earth had been taken down to *rasatala*. [48] To ensure welfare, the lord of sacrifices assumed the form of a boar, raised it up from there and established it. The third creation was that of the rishis and he assumed the form of the divine rishi. [49] He collated the texts known as the *Satvata Tantra*. [50] If one follows these, the fruits of action do not bind down a person. In the fourth creation, he was born as the twin rishis, Nara and Narayana, sons of Dharma's wife. [51] He controlled his senses and performed extremely difficult austerities. In the fifth, his name was Kapila, foremost among the Sid-

dhas. [52] He instructed Asuri [53] about the true principles of samkhya. [54] Over time, this knowledge has been lost. In the sixth, Anasuya prayed that she might obtain him as Atri's son. [55] He taught Alarka, Prahlada and others about metaphysics. In the seventh, he was born as Yajna, the son of Akuti and Ruchi. [56] With Yama and large numbers of other gods, he ruled over the period of Svayambhu. [57] In the eighth, Urukrama [58] was born as the son of Nabhi and his queen, Meru. He exhibited the path to all the persevering ones and was honoured by all the mendicants. O brahmanas! Worshipped by the rishis, he assumed the ninth form of Prithu. He milked the earth of herbs and other products and made it attractive. [59] At the time of Chakshusha Manu, [60] when the entire earth was flooded in water, he assumed the form of a fish, [61] saved Vaivasvata Manu and made him ascend the boat. In his eleventh, when the gods and the *asura*s were churning the ocean, the lord assumed the form of a tortoise and sustained Mount Mandara on his back. [62] In his twelfth, he was in the form of Dhanvantari. [63] In his thirteenth, he assumed the form of a woman, Mohini, making the gods drink and confounding the others. [64] The Indra among the *daitya*s [65] was extremely energetic. In his fourteenth, he assumed the form of Narasimha and placing him on his thighs, used his talons to rip apart his chest, just as a maker of mats tears reeds. [66] In his fifteenth, he assumed the form of a dwarf and went to Bali's sacrifice. Desiring the world of the gods, he sought the space that could be covered in three strides. [67] In the sixteenth descent, he saw that the kings were causing injury to the brahmanas. Enraged, he [68] exterminated *kshatriya*s from the earth twenty-one times. In the seventeenth, he was born as the son of Satyavati and Parashara. [69] On seeing that people were limited in intelligence, he classified the Vedas into different branches. Desiring to accomplish the tasks of the gods, he assumed the form of a god among men. [70] He restrained the ocean and performed many other acts of valour. In the nineteenth and the twentieth, to remove the burden of the earth, he took birth in the lineage of the Vrishnis as Rama and Krishna. [71] When kali yuga ensues, to confound the enemies of the gods, he will be born as Jina's son, in the land of Kikata and will be named Buddha. [72] When it is the conjunction of two yugas, kings will generally be like bandits. The lord of the uni-

verse will be born as Vishnuyasha's son and will be named Kalki. [73] Thousands of streams flow from an inexhaustible lake. O brahmanas! Like that, Hari, the store of sattva, has innumerable descents. The rishis, humans, gods, Manu's immensely energetic sons and the Prajapatis are all said to be born from Hari's portions. These are the parts and sub-parts of the illustrious Purusha, Krishna himself. Whenever the senses of the worlds are afflicted, they offer protection, from one yuga to another yuga. The births of the illustrious one are mysterious. If a man controls himself and, morning and evening, devotedly chants accounts of the births, he is freed from all miseries. The form of the illustrious one consists of the supreme consciousness of his atman. Using Mahat and other attributes of his soul, he uses the qualities of maya to fashion these forms. Those who are ignorant say that torrents of clouds are created in the sky and the dust of the earth is created by the wind. However, the one with insight can distinguish what is seen. [74] Beyond this, there is a form that is not manifest, arranged through the attributes. Since it is like that, it cannot be seen and cannot be heard. This is the jivatman, which is born again. Through self-realization, one can counter the appearance of the gross and the subtle forms, which appear because one is ignorant. When this is countered, one achieves sight of the brahman. When the intelligence becomes accomplished, the taints that result from the goddess of maya subside. Such a learned person becomes accomplished and obtains glory in his greatness. Thus, the wise ones describe the births and the deeds of one who does not act and is not born. Even the Vedas find this lord of the heart to be mysterious. Invincible in his sports, he creates, maintains and destroys the universe, but is not attached to any of this. He controls himself and is inside all living creatures. He only seems to enjoy the six characteristics and the six qualities. [75] An unaccomplished person cannot comprehend the movements of an actor. Like that, an ignorant creature cannot use his mind and words to comprehend the accomplished acts of the creator and his names and forms. He cannot be crossed in his valour and he holds a part of the chariot in his hand. [76] His maya is unobstructed and pervasive. If a person devotedly serves him at his lotus-scented feet, only then will the person be able to understand the supreme glory of the creator. He is

the lord of all the worlds. O illustrious ones! You are fortunate. With all your souls, you have accepted Vasudeva. Therefore, you will no longer suffer from the fierce cycle. [77] This is the Purana named Bhagavata and it is full of the brahman. The illustrious rishi composed it in excellent shlokas. It is blessed and is beneficial for the worlds. It brings great welfare. He extracted the essence of all the Vedas and the ancient accounts. Having extracted the essence, he made his son, [78] supreme among those who know about the atman, receive it. Surrounded by the supreme rishis, when the great king, Parikshit, was engaged in *praya* [79] on the banks of the Ganga, he [80] made him hear it. This Purana has arisen now, in kali yuga, when all learning has been destroyed, after Krishna returned to his own abode. It is like the sun and is full of knowledge about dharma. O brahmanas! When the greatly energetic brahmana rishi recited it, I was there. Through his favours, I attentively learnt it. According to my learning and according to my intelligence, I will make you hear it.'

Chapter 1(4)

The sages were engaged in that long sacrifice. When Suta said this, Shounaka, the aged and extremely learned leader of the congregation, praised him. He said, 'O Suta! O immensely fortunate one! O supreme among eloquent ones! O Suta! Tell us the account of the sacred Bhagavata, as spoken by the illustrious Shuka. What urged Krishna, the sage, to compile this *samhita*? [81] In what yuga was this done? Where and for what reason? His son was a great *yogi*, impartial and without any sense of discrimination. [82] He was single-minded and had woken up from his sleep. [83] He secreted himself and pretended to be stupid. When he followed his son, the rishi was not naked. On seeing him, out of modesty, the divine maidens covered their bodies with garments. But they had not done this for his son. [84] Amazed to see this, the sage asked and they replied, "In you, the sense of difference between a man and a woman exists. But that's not the case with your son, whose attitude is pure." When he arrived in Kurujangala, how did

the citizens recognize him? [85] He arrived and wandered around in Gajasahvya, like one who was mad, dumb and stupid. How did a conversation occur between the *rajarshi* Pandaveya and the sage, in the course of which, the Satvata text was recited? [86] The immensely fortunate one tarried at the house of a householder only for as long as it takes to milk a cow, thereby transforming the place into a tirtha and a hermitage. [87] The emperor extended the honour of the Pandu lineage. Disregarding the prosperity of an empire, why did he engage in praya on the banks of the Ganga? For the sake of their own welfare, enemies brought riches and worshipped him, seeking refuge at his feet. The brave one was handsome and young. Why did he give all of this up, including his own life? These are very difficult to cast aside. It is amazing. There are excellent people who are devoted to the world and other people, to the welfare of the worlds and the prosperity of others. They do not live for themselves, but as refuges for others. How could a person like that free himself from his own body? Tell us everything about what has been asked. Other than the Vedas, I think that you are skilled in speaking about all these subjects.'

Suta replied, 'When dvapara, the third yuga arrived, the yogi was born from Hari's portion as the son of Parashara and Vasavi. [88] On one occasion, when the solar disc had arisen, he touched the sacred waters of the Sarasvati and was seated alone. The rishi knew about the past and the future. He perceived that because of the progression of time, the dharma of the different yugas had got mixed up. From one yuga to another yuga, this is what happens on earth. He perceived a diminished strength in the attributes of everything made up of the elements. There was a lack in faith and spirit. Because of evil intelligence, lifespans became shorter. With his divine insight, the sage perceived the misfortune of people. Infallible in his vision, he thought about what would bring welfare to all the varnas and the ashramas. He saw that the four kinds of sacrificial rites in the Vedas would purify people. Therefore, to continue the sacrifices, he expanded the single Veda into four. The Vedas were divided into four—Rig, Sama, Yajur and Atharva. The Itihasa and Puranas are said to be the fifth Veda. Paila received the Rig, the wise Jaimini the Sama and Vaishampayana alone became accomplished in

the Yajur. The terrible sage, Sumantu, was given Atharva, associated with Angiras. My father, Romaharshana, was given the Itihasa and the Puranas. Those rishis divided their respective Vedas into many different parts. Through their disciples, the disciples of their disciples and further disciples, different branches of the Vedas resulted. The illustrious Vyasa was compassionate towards those who were miserable. Thus, he divided the Vedas so that even men with limited intelligence could sustain them. The sacred texts are not accessible to women, *shudra*s and the worst among the brahmanas. [89] There are foolish ones who do not know which beneficial acts ensure welfare in this world. Out of compassion towards them, the sage composed the Bharata account. [90] O brahmanas! In this way, with all his soul, he was always engaged in the welfare of all creatures. However, his heart was still not satisfied. His heart was still not satisfied and he was seated alone on the sacred banks of the Sarasvati, debating within himself. The one who knew about dharma said, "Firm in my vows, I have honoured the Vedas, the preceptors and the fire. Avoiding everything unreal, I have accepted those instructions. For the sake of women, shudras and others, I have demonstrated the meaning of the teachings in Bharata, so that they can also see. Despite this, my body and my atman, though immersed in the supreme atman, appear incomplete. The radiance of the excellent brahman cannot be discerned. Is that because I have generally not directed myself towards the dharma of the Bhagavata? It is loved by those who have attained the supreme state and is also loved by Achyuta." [91] He was regretting in this way, taking himself to be inferior. At that time, Narada approached Krishna's [92] hermitage, the one mentioned before. Having got to know that he had come, the sage quickly got up. In the proper way, he worshipped Narada, who was worshipped by the gods.'

Chapter 1(5)

Suta said, 'The extremely learned *devarshi* [93] seated himself comfortably. With the veena in his hand, he seemed to smile as he spoke to the brahmana

rishi.

'Narada asked, "O son of Parashara! Are you satisfied with yourself and with your body, atman and mind? You have performed the extremely wonderful task of composing Bharata, explaining all the objectives of existence. [94] You have successfully obtained answers to everything that you asked. You have sought and studied about the eternal brahman. [95] O lord! Despite this, why are you grieving, as if you take yourself to have been unsuccessful?"

'Vyasa replied, "Everything that you have said is true. Nevertheless, my soul is not satisfied. O one who is fathomless in knowledge! You have been generated from the one who created himself. [96] Therefore, I am asking you about the reason for this latent disquiet. You know about everything that is mysterious. You have worshipped the ancient Purusha. [97] His mind is the master of the past and the future. Without being attached, he uses his qualities to create and destroy the universe. Like the sun, you wander around in the three worlds. Like the wind, you course inside everything and are a witness to their atmans. I have followed the vows of dharma and have submerged myself in the brahman, the source of cause and effect. Tell me why this has not been sufficient."

'Narada said, "You have generally not described the unblemished fame of the illustrious one. Since he has not been satisfied with this, I think the insight has been limited. O supreme among sages! You have described dharma, artha and the others. [98] However, Vasudeva's greatness has not been described in it. Hari sanctifies the universe. Colourful words that do not describe his glory are like a tirtha frequented by crows. Those whose minds dwell in the supreme spirit are like swans and do not find any pleasure there. If the creation of words is not in proper shlokas and is badly structured, as long as it describes the names and fame of the unlimited one, virtuous people hear and sing it. It destroys the sins of people. Action without a desire for the fruit does not dazzle, if it is devoid of attachment to Achyuta. Nor does pure and spotless knowledge. How can action without any reason [99] dazzle, if it is not offered to the eternal lord? It remains imperfect. O immensely fortunate one! O illustrious one! O one whose insight is infalli-

ble! O one famous for purity! O one who is devoted to the truth! O one who is firm in vows! For the sake of freeing everyone from all bonds, be attentive and remember Urukrama's deeds. Whatever else you desired to describe, since they were distinct from this, [100] they assumed uncleansed names and forms. Like a boat that is struck by the wind, an agitated mind can never find a stable place of refuge anywhere. Generally, people are naturally addicted. You have committed a great and reprehensible transgression. For the sake of dharma, you have instructed them in words that speak of dharma. However, they will not pay heed and this will not restrain them. [101] Only an accomplished person who has withdrawn from happiness [102] is capable of comprehending the lord, whose boundaries are unlimited. They are whirled around by qualities and do not understand their own atmans. Therefore, you must instruct them about the lord's deeds. If a person abandons his own dharma and worships Hari's lotus feet, even if he falls down while he is still immature, there is nothing unfavourable that occurs as a consequence. If a person follows his own dharma, but does not worship him, what gain does he obtain? That is the reason a wise person must strive for that which is not obtained by circling above and below. [103] Everywhere, any happiness that is obtained follows the subtle progress of time and ends in unhappiness. O dear Vyasa! A person who worships Mukunda [104] does not have to be born again and go through this cycle. A person who has grasped Mukunda's lotus feet remembers it again, and savouring it, does not desire to let go again. The illustrious one is this universe, but is also distinct from it. The creation, preservation and destruction of the universe result from him. You know this yourself. Nevertheless, I have given you a small indication. Your insight is without blemish. You know your atman and that you have been born as a portion of the supreme Purusha, the paramatman. Though you are without birth, this has happened for the welfare of the worlds. Therefore, enumerate the arising of the one who is great in powers. Wise ones have determined that the infallible objective of a man's austerities, learning, sacrifices, recital of hymns, intelligence and charity is the description of his [105] qualities, through excellent shlokas. O sage! In ancient times, I was born as the son of a servant-maid who attended to those who

spoke about the Vedas. As a child, during the rainy season, I was engaged by those yogis to serve them and lived with them. Though I was a boy, I did not possess any kind of fickleness. I was self-controlled and was not interested in playing. I followed and served the sages and spoke little. Though they were impartial vis-à-vis everyone, they took compassion on me. I took the permission of the brahmanas and ate their leftover food, once a day. Through such conduct, my sins were destroyed and my consciousness was purified. At that time, an attraction was generated in me towards this kind of dharma. Through their favours, I heard enchanting accounts about Krishna being sung. O dear Vyasa! As I heard every pada, faith developed in me and I developed a taste for this beloved account. O great sage! As I obtained this taste, my intelligence did not deviate from this beloved account. I realized that existence and non-existence [106] were all the consequence of my own illusions. I saw in me the brahman, who has been thought of as the supreme. Thus, during the autumn and the rainy seasons, I continuously [107] and incessantly heard the great-souled sages chant about Hari's unblemished fame. This created devotion in me and dispelled all rajas and tamas. Though I was a child, I was faithful and self-controlled and followed them. I was devoted and obedient and my sins were destroyed. They were compassionate and kind towards those who were distressed. As they left, they instructed me about the most secret knowledge, uttered by the illustrious one himself. Thereby, I came to comprehend the maya and power of the illustrious creator, Vasudeva. Knowing this, one can reach his feet. O brahmana! It has been determined that this is the medication for the three kinds of misery, [108] the dedication of all action to the illustrious lord, the brahman. O one who is excellent in vows! Something may cause a disease in creatures. However, when applied as medication, it can also cure the disease. Thus, all the action undertaken by men is the cause of their being in this cycle. [109] However, when dedicated to the supreme, they are capable of destroying the consequences. [110] In this world, any action that is undertaken for the satisfaction of the illustrious one and any knowledge that is dependent on him has the attributes of bhakti yoga. [111] When one constantly undertakes action in accordance with the will of the illustrious one, one accepts Krishna and re-

members him, his names and his qualities. O illustrious Vasudeva! I bow down before you. Oum! I bow down before Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Samkarshana. [112] We meditate on you. These are forms only in name. He has no form and these are forms resulting from *mantra*s. A man who sacrifices to the Purusha who warrants all sacrifices is one who is perfect in perception. O brahmana! This is the knowledge I obtained because of what I had done. Because of my devotion to him, Keshava himself bestowed on me the wealth of this knowledge. You are vast in your knowledge and have heard about the lord. Those who desire learning become successful through this. Describe this, for the sake of souls who are repeatedly suffering. There is no other means to be liberated from this misery."'

Chapter 1(6)

Suta said, 'The illustrious devarshi became silent, after describing his birth and deeds. However, Vyasa, Satyavati's son, again asked the brahmana.

'Vyasa asked, "The mendicants instructed you about that knowledge and departed. At that age in your life, what did you do then? O Svayambhu's son! What conduct did you follow in your subsequent life? In the course of time, how did you give up the body that you had then obtained? O supreme among gods! Time destroys everything. All this concerns an earlier era. How has your memory not been erased?"

'Narada replied, "After having instructed me about that knowledge, the mendicants departed. I was at that age in life and I did the following. I was the only son of my mother. She was limited in her intelligence and was a servant. She had no refuge other than her son and she bound me in her affection. Though she desired my welfare, she was not independent and could not think of anything. Like wooden dolls, people are under the subjugation of the lord. Though I disregarded it, [113] I was a child who was five years old. I dwelt in a brahmana's family and had no idea about different directions, countries and time. Once, in order to milk a cow, she had gone out in the night. Goaded by destiny, along the path, she touched a snake with her foot

and was bitten. The lord desires the welfare of his devotees and I thought that this was one of his favours. [114] I left in the northern direction. I saw prosperous habitations, cities, villages, pastures, mines, fields, valleys, parks, forests and groves there. There were mountains with colourful minerals. There were trees whose branches had been broken by elephants. There were lakes with sparkling water and lotuses, frequented by the gods. There were the beautiful tones of birds, rendered more beautiful by being mixed with the buzzing of bees. I passed through clumps of rushes, bamboo, reeds, *kusha* grass, cane and caves. Alone, I then reached a vast and desolate forest that was difficult to pass through. It was terrible and fearful because it was the sporting ground of predatory beasts, owls and jackals. My body and senses were exhausted. I was hungry and thirsty. I bathed in a pool in a river. Having touched the water, my fatigue was dispelled. In the forest that was devoid of humans, I sought refuge and seated myself under a *pippala*. [115] I thought about what I had been taught and used my atman to meditate on the atman. [116] As I meditated on his lotus feet, my consciousness was overwhelmed with devotion. Because of my eagerness, tears rolled down from my eyes and slowly, Hari manifested himself in my heart. O sage! I was overwhelmed by great love and all my limbs were excited and submerged in it. I was immersed in an ocean of bliss and could no longer see both of us. The illustrious one's form is loved by the mind and dispels all sorrow. When I could no longer see it, I suddenly stood up. I suffered and my mind was distressed. I wished to see him again and fixed my mind in my heart. But though I concentrated, I could not see him. I was dissatisfied and afflicted. While I struggled in that desolate place, the one who cannot be reached through speech addressed me in deep and gentle words, seeking to pacify my grief. 'Alas! In this life, you do not deserve to see me. It is extremely difficult for imperfect yogis, those not ripened by cleansing their sins, to see me. O unblemished one! Because of your good deeds and because of your desire, you have seen this form of mine once. A virtuous person who desires me, gradually casts aside all the desires of his heart. By serving the virtuous for a short period of time, your intelligence has been firmly fixed on me. After giving up this inferior world, you will go and be-

come my attendant. An intelligence that is fixed in me never perishes. Because of my favours, at the time of the creation and destruction of subjects, your memory will remain.' The great being, the lord, had no form. The sky was his form. After saying this, he stopped. He is the greatest of the great and had shown me compassion. I bowed my head down and worshipped him. With all my bashfulness destroyed, I recited the name of the infinite one. I remembered his mysterious and auspicious deeds. I no longer possessed any desire, pride or jealousy. Satisfied in my mind, I roamed around the earth and bided my time. [117] O brahmana! Thus, a person whose intelligence is fixed in Krishna is not attached and there is no blemish in his soul. In the course of time, like a flash of lightning, death appeared. As I was united with the pure form of that illustrious one, the body that consisted of the five elements fell down and obtained the fruits of the actions I had undertaken. At the end of the kalpa, the lord withdraws everything into himself and lies down and sleeps on the water. Together with the lord, [118] I also entered his breath. After one thousand yugas, [119] he arose and desired to create again. Marichi and the other rishis, and I, were created out of his breath. [120] Not deviating from my vows, I wander in and out of the three worlds. Through the favours of the great Vishnu, my movements are not impeded anywhere. This veena was given to me by the god. [121] It is ornamented with the sound of the brahman. It vibrates with accounts of Hari. I sing and wander around. His feet are tirthas and his exploits are pleasant to hear. Whenever I sing about his valour, he swiftly shows himself in my heart, as if he has been summoned. There are those whose intelligence is afflicted, they are repeatedly agitated by the objects of the senses. For them, this world is like an ocean and recounting Hari's exploits is like a boat that can be used to cross this. There are those who are repeatedly struck by desire and avarice and are not pacified by techniques of yoga like self-restraint. For them, serving Mukunda satisfies the soul. O unblemished one! I have told you everything that you asked me about, the mystery of my birth and deeds. I have now satisfied your soul."'

Suta said, 'The illustrious Narada spoke in this way to Vasavi's son. Taking his leave, the sage went away where he wished, stringing his veena.

This devarshi is blessed. He sings about the deeds of the one who wields the Sharnga bow. [122] He sings and plucks the strings and delights the afflicted universe.'

Chapter 1(7)

Shounaka asked, 'O Suta! After Narada left, what did the illustrious lord, Badarayana do? He had heard what was desired.'

Suta replied, 'On the western banks of the Sarasvati, Brahma's river, there is a hermitage. The rishis refer to it as Shamyaprasa. It is a place that extends sacrifices. Vyasa sat down there, in his hermitage, which was adorned with clumps of *badari* trees. [123] He touched water and concentrated his mind. He fixed his pure mind properly on bhakti yoga. He saw the complete Purusha and the maya that depended on him. It is because of this that a living being is deluded and the atman comes under the subjugation of the three qualities, though it is actually beyond these and is supreme. It thus suffers hardship because of what it has done. The means for mitigating this hardship are in bhakti yoga to Adhokshaja. Since people do not know this, the learned one composed the *Satvata Samhita*. By listening to this, a man develops devotion to Krishna, the supreme Purusha. All sorrow, confusion and fear are destroyed. Having composed the *Bhagavata Samhita* and arranged it, the sage taught it to his son, Shuka, who was fixed on renunciation.'

Shounaka asked, 'The sage [124] was indifferent towards everything and was fixed on renunciation. He had found delight in his own atman. Why did he study this large text?'

Suta replied, 'There are sages who are free of bondage, finding delight in their own atmans. However, Hari Urukrama possesses such wonderful qualities that they too find delight in him, even though it is without motives. The intelligence of Badarayana's illustrious son was attracted to Hari's qualities. He was also always loved by those who were devoted to Vishnu. Hence, he studied this great account. I will now start to describe Krishna's account by

beginning with the birth, deeds and death of the royal sage, Parikshit, and the departure of the sons of Pandu. In the battle, the brave Kouravas and Srinjayas went to the destination meant for heroes. [125] Struck by Bhima's club, the thigh of Dhritarashtra's son was shattered and he was lamenting. At that time, Drona's son desired to do what would bring pleasure to his master. Seeing that Krishna's [126] sons were asleep in the night, he severed their heads and brought them as a gift. However, he [127] found this disagreeable and condemned the deed. When the mother of the children heard that the sons had been slain, she was severely tormented. Tears started to flow from her eyes and she wept. The one with the diadem [128] comforted her and said, "O fortunate one! I will bring you the head of the assassin, the inferior brahmana, [129] severing it with arrows released from Gandiva. I will thus wipe away your tears. Having cremated your sons, you can then bathe, while standing on his head." Achyuta was his friend and charioteer. [130] Having comforted his beloved with these sweet and colourful words, the one who wielded a fierce bow donned his armour. The one with the ape on his standard advanced towards his preceptor's son on his chariot. [131] From a distance, the slayer of the princes saw him advancing. Anxious in his mind, he fled on his chariot. To save his life, he fled swiftly, just as Arka was scared of Rudra and fled. [132] When the brahmana's son found that his horses were exhausted and there was no other means of saving himself, he thought that he could only save himself with the *brahmashira* weapon. [133] He touched water, controlled himself and affixed it, even though he did not know how to withdraw it, a danger to his life having presented itself. [134] A terrible energy was manifested and enveloped all the directions. Seeing that his life was in danger, Jishnu spoke to Vishnu. [135] "O Krishna! O mighty-armed one! O Krishna! O one who grants devotees freedom from fear! For those who are consumed in this cycle of life, you alone are the means of salvation. You are the original Purusha. You are the lord himself, superior to nature. [136] Using the power of your consciousness to cast aside maya, you station your atman in absolute bliss. You are he. The intelligence of this world of the living is confounded by maya. For welfare and for dharma and other attributes, [137] you use your own valour to destroy it. Desiring to re-

move the burden of the earth and to ensure the welfare of your devotees who think of nothing but you, you descend in the form of an avatara. This extremely terrible energy is advancing from all the directions. O god of the gods! What is it? Where has it come from? I do not understand it." The illustrious one replied, "Know this to be the Brahma weapon used by Drona's son. Even though he does not know how to withdraw it, because a threat to his life presented itself, he has invoked it. Except itself, no other weapon is capable of countering it. You know about this extremely powerful weapon. Therefore, use the energy of your own weapon to counter the energy of this weapon." [138] Hearing the words spoken by the illustrious one, Phalguna, [139] the destroyer of enemy heroes, touched water and circumambulated him. [140] He then invoked his own Brahma weapon against the other Brahma weapon. The energy from both these arrows engulfed each other and mingled. The earth, the firmament and the space between the earth and the firmament were enveloped, as if by the sun and the fire. The energy of both the weapons was seen and it was as if a great burning down of the three worlds was about to take place. All the subjects thought that the fire of destruction that comes at the end of a yuga would burn them down. Witnessing the destruction of the subjects and the devastation of the worlds, and ascertaining Vasudeva's view, Arjuna withdrew both the weapons. [141] His eyes were coppery red with rage. He advanced towards Goutami's terrible son [142] and bound him up with ropes, like an animal. He used his strength to tie up the enemy with ropes and wished to take him to the camp. However, the illustrious one, with eyes like lotuses, spoke to Arjuna. "O Partha! You should not save this brahma-bandhu. Kill him. While the innocent children were asleep, he killed them in the night. A person who knows about dharma does not kill an enemy who is distracted, mad, intoxicated, without a chariot, terrified, or one who seeks refuge. Nor does he kill a child, a woman, or someone who is foolish. If a person preserves his life by taking away the lives of others, he is wicked and devoid of compassion. Killing such a man is better for him too. Otherwise, he will be brought down because of what he does. I heard what you promised Panchali. [143] You told the beautiful one that you would bring her the head of the person who killed her sons. O

brave one! Therefore, this evil person should be killed. He is an assassin and has slain your relatives. He is the worst of his lineage and has done what is disagreeable to his own master." Krishna urged Partha, wishing to test his sense of dharma. However, though the grave act of killing his son [144] had been committed, he did not desire to kill his preceptor's son. Govinda was his beloved charioteer. He took him [145] to his own camp and presented him to his beloved, who was lamenting because her sons had been killed. Krishna [146] saw the preceptor's son, brought there, bound with ropes like an animal. Because of the contemptible act he had done, his face was cast downwards. Compassionate because of her feminine nature, she bowed down before him. The virtuous one could not tolerate the sight of his having been brought there, bound in this fashion. She said, "Release him. A brahmana is always a preceptor. Release him. You became accomplished in all the weapons through his [147] favours and learnt how to release, control and withdraw them. You learnt *dhanurveda* [148] and its mysteries. In the form of his son, the illustrious Drona is still present. It is because of him [149] that Kripi, his wife, did not give up her life. O one who knows about dharma! O immensely fortunate one! You should not do anything that is a sin. This one belongs to a lineage that must be constantly honoured, revered and worshipped. Let his mother Goutami, who revered her husband like a divinity, not weep. I am tormented because my children have been killed. Tears are repeatedly flowing down my face. Let her not be like me. If kings do not control themselves and enrage a lineage of brahmanas, their own families are swiftly burnt down, with their relatives, and are afflicted by grief." O brahmanas! The king who was Dharma's son [150] applauded the queen's words, which were just, compassionate, guileless, impartial and great, and in conformity with dharma. Nakula, Sahadeva, Yuyudhana, [151] Dhananjaya, [152] Devaki's illustrious son [153] and the other women also agreed. However, the intolerant Bhima said, "It has been said that it is best to kill someone like him. This futile act of killing the children while they were asleep has not served his interests, nor those of his master." Hearing the words spoken by Bhima and Droupadi, Chaturbhuja [154] looked towards his friend's [155] face and seemed to smile. He said, "A brahma-bandhu must not be killed. An

assassin deserves to be killed. Both of these injunctions have been laid down by me and must be carried out. You comforted your beloved and you must make that pledge come true. You must do what is agreeable to Bhimasena, Panchali and me." Arjuna suddenly understood Hari's intention. He used his sword to sever the gem that was on the brahmana's head, along with some locks of hair. [156] He released the one who was bound with the ropes, who had lost his lustre because of the act of killing the children. Without the gem, he lost his energy and was cast out of the camp. Slaying the physical body of a brahma-bandhu is not recommended. Instead, his head should be shaved, his wealth should be taken away and he should be exiled from that place. With Krishna, [157] all the Pandavas were afflicted by grief on account of their sons. They performed the funeral rites for their dead relatives.'

Chapter 1(8)

Suta said, 'They then desired to offer water to their dead relatives. With Krishna [158] and placing the women at the forefront, they went to the Ganga. Having offered water, all of them grievously lamented again. They bathed in the waters, sanctified by the dust of Hari's lotus feet. The lord of the Kurus [159] was seated there, along with his younger brothers, Dhritarashtra, Gandhari, grieving because of her sons, Pritha [160] and Krishna. [161] Along with the sages, Madhava comforted the ones who were sorrowing because their relatives had been killed. He showed them the reaction that the progress of time has on living beings. Ajatashatru [162] had got his own kingdom back, which had been taken away from him by the deceitful ones. The wicked ones had been killed. Those who had dared to touch the queen's hair had diminished their own lifespans. [163] Three excellent and well-prepared horse sacrifices had been performed. [164] His fame and purity had spread in all directions, like that of the one who performed one hundred. [165] He [166] took his leave from the sons of Pandu, accompanied by Shini's son [167] and Uddhava. He was worshipped by Dvaipayana and the other brahmanas and

worshipped them back in return. O brahmana! [168] Having made up his mind to go to Dvaraka, he ascended his chariot. However, he saw Uttara [169] rushing towards him, overwhelmed by fear. Uttara said, "Save me. O great yogi! Save me. O god of the gods! O lord of the universe! When people cause each other's deaths, I do not see anyone other than you who can grant freedom from fear. My lord! O lord! A hot iron arrow is rushing towards me. O protector! If you so desire, let it burn me down. But let it not bring down my embryo." [170] The illustrious one, devoted to his devotees, heard her words patiently. He understood that Drona's son had released the weapon to destroy the last of the Pandavas. O best among sages! [171] On seeing that five arrows were headed in their respective directions, the Pandavas picked up their own weapons. Their souls were on him and on no one else. On seeing that a catastrophe was about to descend on them, the lord wished to protect his own and picked up his *sudarshana* weapon. [172] Hari, the lord of yoga, is inside the atmans of all living creatures. For the sake of the descendants of the Kuru lineage, he used his maya to cover the embryo of Virata's daughter. [173] O descendant of the Bhrigu lineage! The brahmashira weapon is invincible and cannot be countered. However, when it faced the Vaishnava energy, it was pacified. Do not think that this is especially wonderful. Achyuta is wonderful in every possible way. He has not been born. Yet, he creates, preserves and destroys everything through his divine maya. They were freed from the energy of Brahma's weapon. With her sons and Krishna, [174] the virtuous Pritha addressed Krishna, who was about to depart, in these words. "I bow down before the Purusha. You are the original lord. You are superior to Prakriti. Though you cannot be seen, you are inside and outside all living beings. I am ignorant and you are Adhokshaja, who is without decay. You are concealed behind this curtain of maya. You cannot be discerned by a foolish person like me, just as an actor in a play is not recognized for what he is. You have yourself had to explain bhakti yoga to enlightened ones, sages who have unblemished souls. How can women know you? I bow down to Krishna, Vasudeva, Devaki's son, Nandagopa's son [175] and Govinda. I bow down before the one with the lotus in his navel. I bow down before the one who is adorned in a garland made out of lotuses.

I bow down before the one whose eyes are like lotuses. I bow down to you, whose feet are marked by the signs of lotuses. O Hrishikesha! [176] For a long time, Devaki was imprisoned by the deceitful Kamsa and had to suffer. [177] O lord! Just as you saved her, you are my protector and have repeatedly saved me and my sons from several difficulties. O Hari! You have protected us from poison, the great fire, sight of flesh-eaters, the wicked ones in the assembly hall, the hardships in the forest, the weapons of *maharatha*s [178] from one battle to another battle and now, the weapon of Drona's son. [179] O preceptor of the universe! Let those dangers occur eternally. In that way, we will see you and will no longer have to go through the cycle of rebirth. You can never be properly approached by a man who is proud of his birth, prosperity, learning and wealth, but can certainly be approached by a person to whom these are nothing. You are the wealth of someone who possesses nothing. I bow down to you. O one who has withdrawn from any attachment to the qualities! O one delighted with your own atman! O peaceful one! O lord of emancipation! I bow down. I think of you as time, the master and the lord, who is without beginning and without end. You roam around impartially in all beings and create dissension in their interactions. [180] O illustrious one! No one knows what you desire to do. Though you behave as if you are human, you cause perplexity. There is no one you love especially and there is no one you particularly hate. It is the minds of men that take you to be partial. O atman of the universe! You have no birth or deeds. You are without birth and have no deeds to perform. However, you take life in inferior species, as men and rishis, and as aquatic creatures. That causes bewilderment. When you committed a crime, the cowherd lady tied a rope around you. [181] In that state, the tears washed away the black collyrium from your eyes. Your face was cast downwards and seemed to be overcome by fear and thoughts. This puzzled me, because even fear is terrified of you. Some say that you have been born to establish the deeds of Punyashloka and your beloved Yadu, just as a sandalwood tree grows in Mount Malaya. [182] Though you are not born, others say you took birth because Vasudeva and Devaki sought you, for welfare and to slay the enemies of the gods. Others say that the earth was like an overburdened boat in the ocean and

was suffering. The self-born one [183] asked you to be born so that this burden might be reduced. There are those who are suffering from ignorance, desire and deeds. Some others say you were born so that such people could hear, remember and worship your deeds. People who hear, sing, continuously chant, remember and take delight in your beneficial deeds, are ones who will soon see your lotus feet that bring an end to this cycle of birth on earth. O lord! You have yourself performed all these beneficial deeds. You are abandoning us well-wishers today, though our lives depend on you. We are devoted to you and all the kings seek to harm us. Other than your lotus feet, we have no refuge. Without being able to see you, what will the names and the forms of the Yadus and the Pandavas be? They will be like senses, without the soul. O wielder of the mace! This place is marked by the impressions of your feet and is radiant because of your signs. It will no longer be as beautiful as it is now. This country is flourishing and prosperous with well-ripened herbs and creepers. The forests, mountains, rivers and oceans are certainly seen to flourish because of you. O lord of the universe! O atman of the universe! O one whose form is the universe! Sever the firm bondage of affection that I have towards my own relatives, the Pandus and the Vrishnis. O lord of the Madhus! [184] Let my intelligence incessantly be focused on nothing but you. Just as the flows of the Ganga head towards the ocean, let my overflowing affection be directed towards you. O Shri Krishna! O Krishna's friend! [185] O bull among the Vrishnis! You are the one who burns down the wicked lineages of the kings. Your valour does not diminish. O Govinda! You descend to destroy the affliction of cows, brahmanas and gods. O lord of yoga! O preceptor of everyone! O illustrious one! I bow down to you." All of his glory was completely expressed in the sweet padas articulated by Pritha. Vaikuntha [186] smiled a little, as if deluding with his maya. He accepted what she said. Taking her leave and that of the other women, he entered Gajasahvya. When he prepared to leave for his own city, he was affectionately restrained by the king. [187] Though he was comforted by Vyasa and the others and by the lord Krishna, the performer of extraordinary deeds, himself, he was afflicted by sorrow and did not comprehend the illustrations from history. The king who was Dharma's son

thought of the death of his well-wishers. O brahmanas! He was overwhelmed by affection and confusion and spoke like an ordinary person. "Alas! Behold the ignorance that exists in the heart of an evil-souled person like me. This body is meant for others, but has destroyed many *akshouhini*s. [188] I have killed children, brahmanas, well-wishers, friends, fathers, brothers and preceptors. Even in one hundred million years, I will not be able to free myself from hell. There are words of instruction to the effect that this does not affect a king who is a master of his subjects and kills enemies in a battle full of dharma. But I do not think this applies to me. [189] I have killed the relatives of women and have reaped the consequences of that deed. I cannot think of any acts done by a householder that can counter this. Mud cannot be cleaned with muddy water. Nor can a sin caused by drinking be cleaned with drink. In that way, even a single act of killing a living being cannot be countered through sacrifices."'

Chapter 1(9)

Suta said, 'He [190] was terrified at having caused harm to all the subjects and wished to understand dharma. He therefore went to the place of destruction, where Devavrata had fallen down. [191] All his brothers followed him on chariots yoked to well-trained horses with golden harnesses. So did the brahmanas, Vyasa, Dhoumya [192] and the others. O brahmana rishi! The illustrious one [193] also followed on a chariot, along with Dhananjaya. The king was as resplendent as Kubera with the *guhyaka*s. [194] They saw Bhishma lying down on the ground, like a god who had been dislodged from the firmament. The Pandavas and their followers, and the wielder of the chakra, bowed down before him. O excellent one! Desiring to see the bull among the Bharatas, the brahmana rishis, the devarshis and the rajarshis assembled there—Parvata, Narada, Dhoumya, the illustrious Badarayana, Brihadashva, Bharadvaja, Renuka's son [195] and his disciples, Vasishtha, Indrapramada, Trita, Gritasmada, Asita, Kakshivat, Goutama, Koushika and Sudarshana. O brahmana! There were other unblemished sages, Brahmarata [196] and others,

Kashyapa, Angiras and others. They arrived there, along with their disciples. The supreme among the Vasus [197] knew about dharma and knew about what should be done at the right time and place. On seeing that those immensely fortunate ones had assembled, he welcomed and worshipped them. He knew the powers of Krishna, the lord of the universe who is in every heart and who had used his maya to assume this embodied form. On seeing him seated there, he worshipped him. Pandu's sons were seated there, overwhelmed by their love and affection. Tears flowed down his eyes and he was overwhelmed by his love and affection for them. He said, "Alas! O sons of Dharma! [198] You have suffered what is unjust. You sought refuge in brahmanas, dharma and Achyuta. You did not deserve to live amidst this hardship. When the *atiratha* [199] Pandu departed, my daughter-in-law Pritha's sons were young. She suffered many hardships on account of you and again suffered them when you grew up. I think all these disagreeable things have been inflicted on you because of destiny, which is like a guardian that has the entire world under its subjugation, just as dense clouds are controlled by the wind. The king is Dharma's son. Vrikodara wields the club in his hand. Krishna [200] knows about weapons and wields the Gandiva bow, with Krishna as his well-wisher. How could calamity have resulted? O king! No man is capable of knowing what destiny desires. When one tries to ascertain this, even wise people are confounded. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Therefore, everything that has happened is because of destiny. O lord! The subjects are without a protector. Following destiny, be a protector and save them. This illustrious one is the original man, Narayana himself. Confounding the world with his maya, he is secretly roaming around amidst the Vrishnis. O king! The illustrious Shiva, devarshi Narada and the illustrious Kapila know his fame and mysteries and that he is the illustrious lord himself. You think that he is your maternal uncle's son, [201] that he is your beloved friend and the best among well-wishers. Because of affection, he has performed the tasks of an adviser, a messenger and a charioteer. He is in everyone's atman. He is impartial towards everyone. He has no second and he is without any sense of ego. He does not do anything out of attachment, nor does his intelligence have any partiality. O lord of the

earth! However, behold his compassion towards devotees who are devoted to him. Since I am giving up my life, Krishna has himself come here to see me. If a yogi gives up his body when his mind is full of affection and when he meditates, chanting his name with words, he is freed from all desire and action. He is the illustrious god of the gods and he is waiting for me to give up this body. He is smiling pleasantly. His eyes are like the rising sun and are delightful. Chaturbhuja's face is like a lotus and he is the object of my meditation." He was lying down on that bed of arrows and Yudhishthira heard him. While the rishis heard, he asked him about many kinds of dharma. He [202] enumerated the varna and ashrama of a person, as determined by his natural traits. He then systematically described the attributes of both non-attachment and attachment. He explicitly described the different divisions and modes of the dharma of donations, the dharma of kings, the dharma of liberation, [203] the dharma for women and Bhagavata dharma. O sage! He explained the modes for attaining dharma, artha, kama and moksha. The one who knew about the truth also expounded many accounts and Itihasa. Yogis who can die at will desire the time of *uttarayana*. [204] While he was describing, this time arrived. The one who was the leader of thousands stopped speaking. Freed from attachment, he fixed his mind on the original Purusha. Chaturbhuja Krishna, dazzling in yellow garments, was standing in front of him and he closed his eyes and fixed his sight on him. He was purified and his inauspicious sentiments were destroyed. Through looking at him, the wounds from the weapons and his exhaustion were swiftly removed. His senses were withdrawn and the confusion of his intelligence disappeared. Ready to quit the physical body, he praised Janardana. "Let my intelligence be freed of all thirst and let it be fixed on the illustrious lord who is a bull among the Satvatas. He obtains pleasure from within himself. All creation and destruction flows from him. However, he sometimes playfully unites with Prakriti. [205] He is desired by the three worlds. His complexion is like that of a *tamala* tree. He wears excellent yellow garments that are like the rays of the sun. His body is etched with sandalwood paste and his face is like a lotus. He is Vijaya's [206] friend. Let my devotion to him be unparalleled. On the field of battle, the dust raised by the horses made

his hair turn grey and it flowed around and decorated his face, together with the perspiration from the exhaustion. My sharp arrows pierced his skin and his armour, but he enjoyed it. Let my atman be in Krishna. He heard his friend's request and placed the chariot in between the forces of his side and that of the enemy. Placing it there, Partha's friend took away the lifespans of the enemy soldiers with his glance. Let my devotion be in him. Polluted in his intelligence, standing in front of the leaders of the armies, he [207] was reluctant to kill his own relatives. However, he [208] used knowledge of the atman to dispel that evil intelligence. Let my devotion be fixed on his supreme feet. For the sake of making my pledge come true, he abandoned his own pledge and leapt down from the chariot. Wielding the wheel of a chariot in his hand, he quickly advanced to kill me, like an elephant against a lion, and his upper garment fell down. [209] He was pierced by sharp arrows and his armour was shattered. He was covered by wounds and I was trying to kill him. For the sake of killing me, he advanced angrily. Let the illustrious Mukunda [210] be my objective. He protected Vijaya's chariot like a relative and held the whip and held the reins of the horses. [211] He was beautiful to behold. I am about to die. Let my devotion be fixed on the illustrious one. In this world, those who are killed after seeing him get their own forms back after death. The cowherd ladies saw his attractive gait, his sports and his sweet smiles and were stricken by love. Mad with infatuation, they mentally sought to copy his extensive movements and merged into his nature. Large numbers of sages and the best among kings assembled at the gathering on the occasion of Yudhishthira's royal sacrifice. He was a sight to behold and received the honours. He has appeared before my atman. He is without birth. He is in the heart of every living being, whom he has himself created. He can be seen like the sun, which though it is one, appears in different forms. I have been cleansed of all differences and confusion and am meditating on him." In this way, he merged his atman into the atman of the illustrious Krishna, in thoughts, words, sight and conduct. He ceased to breathe. Everyone understood that Bhishma was completely immersed in the brahman. Like birds, when the day is over, they became silent. The gods and men sounded their drums. Virtuous kings praised him and flowers

showered down from the sky. O Bhargava! For some time, Yudhishthira was miserable. After that, he arranged for all the funeral rites to be performed for the dead body. Using all kinds of secret names, the cheerful sages praised Krishna. With Krishna in their hearts, they again returned to their own hermitages. With Krishna, Yudhishthira went to Gajasahvya and comforted his father [212] and the ascetic Gandhari. With the permission of his father and with Vasudeva's sanction, the lord and king followed dharma and ruled over the kingdom of his fathers and grandfathers.'

Chapter 1(10)

Shounaka asked, 'Yudhishthira was supreme among the upholders of dharma. After killing the murderers who wished to rob him of his inheritance, what did he and his younger brothers do thereafter? What was their conduct? Was their enjoyment restricted?' [213]

Suta replied, 'The lineage of the Kurus was burnt down, like a clump of bamboos in a fire. Hari, the preserver of creation, seeded it again. [214] The lord instated Yudhishthira in his own kingdom and was delighted. He [215] heard the words spoken by Bhishma and Achyuta. With his confusion dispelled, his conduct was based on knowledge. He ruled over the earth, extending up to the oceans, like Indra, whose refuge is also the unvanquished one. [216] His younger brothers followed him. Parjanya [217] showered down as desired and the earth yielded all the objects of desire. The udders of the delighted cows were so swollen with milk that they sprinkled the grazing ground. All the rivers, oceans, mountains, trees, creepers and herbs yielded every seasonal fruit that he [218] wished for. The king had no enemies [219] and creatures were not subjected to anxiety, disease or hardships caused by destiny, the elements or any other reason. Hari dwelt for some months in Hastinapura, to dispel the sorrow of his well-wishers and to bring pleasure to his sister. [220] He then took his leave and permission and embraced and honoured him. [221] Embraced and honoured by others, he ascended his chariot. Subhadra, Droupadi, Kunti, Virata's daughter, [222] Gandhari, Dhritarashtra,

Yuyutsu, Goutama, [223] the twins, [224] Vrikodara, Dhoumya, the women, the daughter of Matsya [225] and the others could not tolerate the separation from the wielder of the Sharnga bow and were bewildered. A learned person who associates with the virtuous and disassociates from the wicked does not wish to give up listening to his good deeds, even if he has heard about his deeds and fame once. The Parthas [226] had fixed their minds on him. How could they bear a separation from him? They had seen him, touched him, conversed with him, slept with him, sat down with him and eaten with him. All of them looked at him and their eyes did not blink. Their minds followed him. Tied with bonds of affection, they glanced at him and moved around, here and there. When Devaki's son emerged from the residence, the women relatives also came out. They held back their overflowing tears of anxiety, since these would be inauspicious. Drums, conch shells, trumpets, veenas, cymbals, cow horns, *dhundhuri*s, [227] kettledrums, bells and larger drums were sounded. Wishing to see him, the Kuru women ascended to the top of the palace. They looked at Krishna and smiled, shy and affectionate, showering down flowers. Gudakesha [228] picked up a white umbrella that was adorned with a net of pearls and had a handle made out of jewels. He held it above his beloved friend. Uddhava and Satyaki fanned him with extremely wonderful whisks. As the lord of Madhu advanced, the road was strewn with flowers and was resplendent. Here and there, true benedictions pronounced by the brahmanas were heard. They were appropriate, but also inappropriate, since he didn't possess attributes, but had himself assumed attributes. [229] With their intelligence thus engaged, the Indras among the Kouravas and the women of the city conversed about him in excellent shlokas and this was more pleasant to hear than all the sacred texts. "He is certainly the ancient Purusha. He is the single one, whose atman is not manifest. He is the lord who is the soul of the universe and he comes before all the qualities. When all the energy has withdrawn into him, he sleeps during the night. [230] He is the one who used his valour and maya and urged Prakriti to create living creatures. His atman is without names and forms, but he desired to impart names and forms to them. He is the one who entrusted the creation of the sacred texts. He is the one whose feet the gods, those who

have conquered their senses and those who have controlled their breath of life, seek. Those who have unblemished souls and hanker, full of devotion, can see him. There is no one else who is capable of cleansing the spirit. O friends! He is the one whose virtuous deeds have been recited in the mysterious parts of the Vedas by those who speak about secrets. He is the lord who sports and creates, preserves and destroys the universe, without being attached to it. Whenever kings are immersed in tamas and live in *adharma*, the supreme one uses sattva to assume form. From one yuga to another yuga, to ensure truth, uprightness, compassion, fame and welfare, he assumes different forms. Wonderful is the one who deserves to be praised the most. Wonderful is the lineage of the Yadus. Madhuvana is most sacred. [231] The bull among men and the consort of Shri [232] was born there and roamed around there, glorifying it. Kushasthali [233] is wonderful. It is sacred and famous on earth and has surpassed the glory of the heavenly bodies. The residents there have been favoured by him and can always see him. The lord always looks at them smilingly. There are women whose hands he has accepted in marriage. They must indeed have observed vows, bathed, offered oblations and worshipped properly to have obtained the lord. O friends! They can repeatedly drink the amrita from his lips. Hoping for this, the women of Vraja [234] repeatedly fainted. There were those who were abducted through *viryashulka* and obtained through *svayamvara*, [235] crushing powerful ones, Chaidya being the most important. They were the mothers of Pradyumna, Samba, Amba and other sons. [236] There were thousands of others who were abducted after Bhouma had been killed. [237] Their feminine nature suffered and they were sullied. However, since the lotus-eyed one accepted them, they were sanctified. Their husband never goes away from them. He touches their hearts by bringing them desired objects." The women of the city spoke about him in such words. Glancing at them and smilingly greeting them, Hari departed. Ajatashatru suspected danger from Madhu's [238] enemies. Therefore, out of affection, he arranged an army consisting of the four kinds of forces [239] for their protection. Afflicted at being separated from him and deep in their affection, the Kouravas followed Shouri [240] for a long distance. However, he made them return and proceeded

towards his beloved city. O Bhargava! After passing through Kurujangala, Panchala, Shurasena, the area around the Yamuna, Brahmavarta, Kurukshetra, Matsya, Sarasvata, deserts, barren regions, Souvira and Abhira, they reached Anarta, [241] which lies beyond all these. The lord and the mounts were slightly exhausted. Here and there, Hari was worshipped and gifts were brought to him. Whenever the sun went into the ocean, [242] he faced the western direction and stopped for the evening rites.'

Chapter 1(11)

Suta said, 'The prosperous region of Anarta was his own. Having arrived there, as if to dispel the sorrow, [243] he blew on his excellent conch shell. The conch shell was thick and white in the middle and touched by Urukrama's mouth, became red. As it was blown, it was held in the cup of his hands, which were like lotuses. [244] It was as if a white swan was singing amidst a clump of red lotuses. Its sound generated fear among those who caused fear to the world. On hearing this, all the subjects, who were eager to see their master, arose and advanced. Like a lamp being offered to the sun, they gave him their offerings. He is completely satisfied and finds pleasure in his own atman. He is the one who always finds his own gratification. However, all those well-wishers were like wards before a guardian and a father. Their faces bloomed in delight and they spoke in voices that choked with joy. "O protector! We always bow down before your lotus feet, worshipped by Virinchi, Varinchya and Indra of the gods. [245] You are the supreme benefit for those who desire the supreme. You are the supreme lord and time is powerless before you. O creator of the universe! Be the one who brings us welfare. You are our mother, well-wisher, master and father. You are our virtuous preceptor and supreme divinity. We will become successful by serving you. It is wonderful that we have got you back as a protector. Even the residents of heaven find it extremely difficult to see you. We can now behold your loving, smiling and gentle face and your form, which brings all kinds of good fortune. O lotus-eyed one! Wishing to see your well-wishers, you

withdrew to the land of the Kurus and Madhu. [246] O Achyuta! Every moment of that seemed like a crore of years. It is as if our eyes were deprived of the sight of the sun. The subjects spoke these words and he heard them. Affectionate towards his devotees, he distributed the favour of his glance and entered the city. It was protected by the Madhus, Bhojas, Dasharhas, Arhas, Kukuras, Andhakas and Vrishnis. [247] They were like him in valour and it was like Bhogavati, [248] protected by the *naga*s. [249] Everywhere, there were sacred trees and creepers characterizing all the seasons, and hermitages. There were gardens, groves, pleasure gardens and beautiful ponds with lotuses. There were arches and gates along the roads and the turrets were marked with signs of festivities. There were colourful standards with flags at the top and these sheltered from the heat of the sun. The important roads, smaller roads, markets and squares had been cleaned and sprinkled with fragrant water. Fruits, flowers, unbroken grain [250] and sprouts were strewn around. [251] The doors of every house were decorated with pots full of curds, unbroken grain, fruits, sugar cane, and other offerings, and incense and lamps. Hearing that the beloved one was coming, the great-minded Vasudeva, [252] Akrura, [253] Ugrasena, Rama, [254] extraordinary in his valour, Pradyumna, Charudeshna [255] and Samba, Jambavati's son, were so happy that they stopped lying down, sitting or eating. Full of respect and love, they happily advanced on their chariots. An Indra among elephants was in front and there were brahmanas with auspicious articles. There was the sound of conch shells and trumpets and the chanting of the brahman. Eager to see him, there were hundreds of excellent courtesans on vehicles. Brilliant earrings dangled from their ears and rendered their foreheads and faces even more beautiful. There were actors, dancers, *gandharva*s, sutas, *magadha*s and *bandi*s. [256] In excellent shlokas, they sang about his extraordinary deeds. The illustrious one approached his relatives, the citizens and the other followers. He met all of them and showed them the appropriate honours. He bowed his head down and greeted them. He embraced and touched them with his hand and glanced at them, smilingly. The lord comforted them and granted them the boons they sought, including the *shvapaka*s. [257] Seniors, brahmanas and their wives and aged ones pronounced benedictions over

him and he was praised by bandis. He thus entered the city. O brahmana! As Krishna advanced along the royal road, women from the noble families of Dvaraka climbed up to the tops of their mansions, so as to witness the great festivities. The residents of Dvaraka were used to seeing him all the time. Even then, they were not satiated by looking at Achyuta, the abode of beauty. His chest is the abode of Shri. The eyes regard his face as a vessel to drink from. His arms are the guardians of the world. His feet are dappled. [258] There was a white umbrella above his head and he was fanned with whisks. Ahead of him, flowers were showered down along the road. His garments were yellow and he was adorned with a garland of wild flowers. He looked like a dark cloud, adorned by the sun, the moon, a rainbow and lightning. He entered his father's residence and was embraced by his own mothers. He cheerfully bowed his head down before the seven mothers, of whom, Devaki was the foremost. [259] Because of their affection, milk began to flow from their breasts and the mothers placed their son on their laps. They were senseless with joy and sprinkled him with tears of delight. Thereafter, he entered his own residence, which was filled with all the objects of desire. There were more than sixteen thousand wives in that mansion. The wives saw that their husband had returned home, after being away, and it was as if their minds were filled with a sense of great festivity. They quickly stood up from their couches and their vows, with shyness writ on their eyes and faces. Overwhelmed with love for their husband, they first embraced him through their sons, then through their glances, and finally, they themselves did it. O foremost among the Bhrigu lineage! Though they tried to restrain the tears of joy in their eyes, they were helpless in preventing them. Though he alone was by their side, his feet seemed to be new and newer still. Though fickle, Shri does not desert his feet. Having been at his feet, how can anyone be separated from those feet? Those kings had led to a burden on earth. Those energetic ones had been surrounded by akshouhinis. He had not wielded a weapon. But just as blowing generates a fire, he had created enmity amongst them, making them kill each other. Using his own maya, he descended into this world of men. The illustrious one behaved like an ordinary person, finding pleasure amidst jewels among women. Their

unrestrained nature, exciting and pure smiles and bashful glances could have slain Madana [260] and those excellent women could have made him cast aside his bow. However, their guiles were incapable of agitating his senses. Ordinary people think he is attached, just as they are attached. Ignorant men think that, like themselves, he is engaged in pursuits. Such is the divinity of the lord that he is not attached to the qualities of Prakriti. Nor are those virtuous atmans who use their intelligence to seek refuge with him. Those feeble and foolish women thought that he followed them alone. Their minds were such that they did not know about the greatness and divinity of their husband.'

Chapter 1(12)

Shounaka asked, 'Ashvatthama released the energetic brahmashira and destroyed Uttara's embryo. However, the lord made it come alive again. How was the immensely intelligent one [261] born? What were the great-souled one's deeds? How did he die? Where did he go after death? We wish to hear this. If you so desire, tell us. We are faithful. Tell us about the knowledge Shuka imparted.'

Suta replied, 'Dharmaraja ruled and delighted his subjects, like a father. He served at Krishna's feet and was not attached to any object of desire. His prosperity, sacrifices, subjects, queen, the brothers, the earth, the lordship over Jambudvipa [262] and his fame reached heaven. O brahmanas! What are objects of pleasure, desired by the gods, to someone whose mind is in Mukunda? Like a person who is hungry, the king was only content and happy with that. [263] O descendant of the Bhrigu lineage! The brave one [264] was in his mother's womb and was being burnt by the weapon's energy. At that time, he saw a being advance towards him. He was the size of a thumb and sparkled. He blazed in his golden diadem. Achyuta was dark and excellent to behold. His garments were like lightning. He was handsome and tall, with four hands. His earrings were made out of molten gold. His eyes were as red as blood. The mace in his hand was being repeatedly whirled around

in all the directions around him, circling like a meteor. With his own mace, he drove away the energy of the weapon, like the sun dispelling mist. He [265] wondered—"Who is this near me?" Having destroyed it, the illustrious lord Hari, immeasurable in his soul and the protector of dharma, vanished, while the ten-month-old looked on. After this, when auspicious planets arose, Pandu's descendant was born, progressively imbibed with all the qualities. He was like Pandu in his energy. The king was delighted and had the rites of birth performed. The brahmanas, Dhoumya, Kripa and the others, pronounced auspicious benedictions. The king, who knew about auspicious occasions, gave gold, cattle, land, villages, elephants and the best of horses and food to brahmanas, on the auspicious occasion of an offspring being born. The brahmanas were content and satisfied. They said, "O bull of the Puru lineage! This is Puru's descendant. This pure one was almost destroyed by invincible destiny. However, he was restored through the favours of Vishnu and the powers of Vishnu. Therefore, he will be known in this world by the name of Vishnurata. [266] O immensely fortunate one! There is no doubt that he will be great and greatly devoted to the illustrious one." Yudhishthira asked, "O great-souled ones! Will he follow this lineage of royal sages? Will he be pure? O excellent ones! Will his deeds be applauded by the virtuous?" The brahmanas answered, "O Partha! This offspring will be like Ikshvaku, Manu's son himself. Like Rama, Dasharatha's son, he will serve brahmanas and be devoted to the truth. Like Shibi, Ushinara's son, he will be generous and provide refuge to those who seek it. [267] He will extend the fame of his lineage, like Dushyanta's son, the performer of sacrifices. [268] Like the two Arjunas, [269] he will be a foremost archer. He will be as invincible as the fire and like the ocean, will be impossible to cross. He will be as valiant as the Indra among animals. [270] As a refuge, he will be like the Himalayas. He will be as patient as the earth and as tolerant as his fathers. He will be like his grandfather [271] in impartiality and like Girisha [272] in granting favours. Like the god who is Rama's refuge, [273] he will be a refuge for all creatures. He will follow Krishna in all the qualities and in greatness. He will be like Rantideva [274] in his generosity. In following dharma, he will be like Yayati. He will be like Bali in perseverance. In his faith towards

Krishna, he will be like Prahlada. He will serve the elders and perform many horse sacrifices. He will give birth to royal sages. He will chastise those who follow evil paths. For the sake of ensuring dharma on earth, he will restrain Kali. [275] He will hear about his own death, through Takshaka, sent by the son of a brahmana. [276] He will then free himself from all attachment and seek refuge at Hari's feet. He will ask about the nature of the atman from the sage who is Vyasa's son. [277] O king! He will then cast aside all fear and go to the banks of the Ganga." The brahmanas, who knew about someone who has been born, instructed the king in this way. Having obtained what they deserved, all of them went away to their own respective homes. The lord had said that he would be famous in the world as Parikshit. He meditated on the one he had seen and tested every man in this way. [278] The prince grew up quickly, like the moon during *shukla paksha*. [279] From one *kashtha* to another kashtha and from one day to another day, he grew up, looked after by his fathers. [280] At that time, the king [281] desired to free himself from the sin of having caused enmity to his relatives and wanted to perform a horse sacrifice. Since there wasn't enough revenue through taxes, he thought about acquiring the requisite wealth. Urged by Achyuta, his brothers discerned his intentions. They brought a lot of riches from the northern direction. [282] Yudhishthira, Dharma's son, became prosperous through those riches. Terrified, [283] he performed three horse sacrifices and dedicated them to Hari. The illustrious one was invited by the king and the brahmanas acted as officiating priests at the king's sacrifice. Desiring to ensure pleasure to his well-wishers, he [284] stayed there for a few months. O brahmana! Having taken leave of the king, Krishna [285] and the relatives, he then went to Dvaravati with Arjuna, surrounded by the Yadus.'

Chapter 1(13)

Suta said, 'Having been on a visit to tirthas, Vidura got to know about the atman's destination from Maitreya. [286] Having thus satisfied his wishes, he went to Hastinapura. In Kousharava's [287] presence, Kshatta [288] asked ques-

tions. However, when devotion towards Govinda was generated in him, he ceased. With his younger brothers, Dhritarashtra, Yuyutsu, suta, [289] Sharadvata [290] and Pritha, Dharma's son saw that his relative had arrived. O brahmana! Gandhari, Droupadi, Subhadra, Uttara, Kripi, many other women from Pandu's lineage, and relatives, with their sons and wives, were also there. They approached him with delight, as if life had returned to their bodies. They approached him in the proper way, embracing and greeting him. They were anxious and suffering, separated from him and shed tears of affection. After he had seated himself, the king offered him the signs of respect. He ate and rested and was happily seated on his seat. In the presence of those who heard, the king started to ask him questions.

'Yudhishthira asked, "Do you remember how we grew up under your shadow and how you protected us? With our mother, you saved us from dangers like poison and fire. How did you maintain yourself when you roamed around the surface of the earth? On this earth, which are the tirthas and *kshetra*s you visited? [291] O lord! A devotee like you is himself a tirtha. With the wielder of the mace inside you, you yourself make a tirtha a true tirtha. O father! [292] What about our well-wishers, the relatives of the divinity Krishna? Did you see, or hear about, the Yadavas? Are they happily residing in their own city?"

Suta said, 'Thus addressed by Dharmaraja, he described everything in due order, as he had experienced it. But he left out the destruction of the Yadu lineage. [293] He was unable to tolerate anything that was disagreeable to men. That incident was miserable and impossible to behold. It presented itself. Out of pity, he did not state it. He was honoured like a god and brought happiness to everyone. He ensured the welfare of his elder brother [294] and resided there for some time. Yama was cursed that he would be a shudra for one hundred years. [295] During that time, Aryama used the appropriate rod of chastisement on those who committed crimes. [296] Yudhishthira obtained his kingdom and saw his grandson, [297] who would bear the burden of the lineage. With his brothers, who were like guardians of the world, he was delighted in his supreme prosperity. There are those who are mad-

dened, excessively attached to homes and desires of this world. However, time is extremely difficult to cross and creeps in, unnoticed.

'Discerning this, Vidura spoke to Dhritarashtra. "O king! Behold. The fear has arrived. Leave quickly. O lord! In this world, there is no counter to this. This illustrious time has come before all of us. Overcome by this, people have to immediately give up their beloved lives, not to speak of things like riches. Your father, brother, well-wishers and sons have been killed. Age has passed. You yourself have been overcome by old age and are residing in another person's house. Alas! The desire to remain alive is extremely great in a living being like you. Like a domesticated animal, you are accepting scraps of food flung towards you by Bhima. Fire was applied to them. They were given poison. Their wife was abused. Their dominion and riches were seized. How can you subsist on what they give? Despite this, like a miserable person, you wish to remain alive. Even though you do not desire it, like an old garment, your body will decay. If a person abandons selfish motives, is detached and free from bondage and gives up this body, heading for an unknown destination, he is said to be unperturbed. The best among men is a person who learns on his own or from others, becoming indifferent and realizing the atman. With Hari in his heart, he departs from his residence. Therefore, leave for the northern direction, without letting your relatives know where you have gone. After this, time, which destroys qualities in men, will arrive." Thus King Ajamidha's [298] insight of wisdom was awoken by his younger brother, Vidura. Firm, he severed the bonds of affection towards his relatives. As instructed by his brother, he left. When her husband left, Subala's virtuous daughter, [299] devoted to her husband, followed him to the Himalayas. Unlike those who strike, virtuous and spirited ones find delight in casting aside the rod of chastisement. Ajatashatru performed the morning prayers [300] and offered oblations into the kindled fire. He gave sesamum seed, land and gold to brahmanas. When he entered the house to worship the seniors, he did not see his father and Subala's daughter.

'He was anxious in his mind. Sanjaya was seated there and he asked, "O Gavalgana's son! [301] Where is our aged father, who doesn't possess eye-

sight? Where is our mother, afflicted by grief on account of her sons? Where has our uncle and well-wisher [302] gone? I am ungrateful and have killed my relatives. As one who has committed a crime, has he suspected me? With his wife, has he submerged himself in the Ganga? After our father, Pandu's, downfall, all of us were children. We were without protection and faced hardships. These uncles and well-wishers protected us. Where have they gone from here?" Suta [303] was also afflicted by the separation, unable to see his own master. [304] He was bewildered, overcome by pity and affection. Suffering greatly, he could not reply. He wiped away the tears with his hands and found the steadiness within his own self. Remembering his master's feet, he replied to Ajatashatru. Sanjaya said, "O delight of the lineage! O mighty-armed one! I do not know what the two fathers [305] have done. Those great-souled ones have deceived me as well." At that time, the illustrious Narada came there with Tumburu. [306] With his younger brothers, he arose and greeted and worshipped the sage. Yudhishthira said, "O illustrious one! I do not know where my fathers have gone. My mother is afflicted by grief on account of her sons. Where has that ascetic lady gone? O illustrious one! This is very difficult to cross and you are like a helmsman. You can show us the other shore."

'The illustrious Narada, supreme among sages, started to speak. "O king! Do not grieve. The entire universe is under the lord's control. The world and its guardians bear the lord's burden. He is the one who engages beings and disengages them. Cows are tethered with a string around the noose and bound with ropes. They bear the lord's burden. They are bound and addressed by different names. A person playing a game engages and disengages the pieces according to his wishes. Like that, the lord plays with humans. Whether you think objects in this world are permanent, impermanent, or both, out of affection that results from delusion, you should not grieve. O dear one! Therefore, give up this lassitude that results from ignorance about your own self. 'Without me, how will those miserable ones subsist without a protector?' This body is made out of five elements and is controlled by time, deeds and qualities. It is as if one is being devoured by a snake. How can a person offer protection to another? Those without hands are subsis-

tence for those with hands. [307] Those without feet are subsistence for quadrupeds. [308] Those who are weak are subsistence for those who are strong. One living being is subsistence for another living being. O king! The illustrious one is one and himself holds everything up through his atman. He shines, inside and outside. Behold his maya, resulting in different forms. O great king! The illustrious one, the creator of all beings, has descended in the form of time, to ensure the destruction of the enemies of the gods. He has performed the task of the gods and is waiting for what remains to be done. As long as the lord is in this world, you need to wait and watch. With his brother and his wife, Gandhari, Dhritarashtra has gone to the southern slope of the Himalayas, to the hermitage of the rishis. The place is known as Saptasrota. [309] To please the seven, [310] the seven flows of the heavenly river [311] were divided into seven streams there. There, he will bathe constantly. [312] Following the ordinances, he will offer oblations into the fire. He will subsist on water and control his atman. He will free himself from all desire. He will control his posture and control his breath. He will withdraw his six senses. [313] Immersing himself in thoughts of Hari, he will cleanse taints associated with rajas and tamas. He will engage in knowledge about the atman and merge into the supreme. With his atman in the reservoir of the brahman, it is like the space inside a pot merging into broader space. He will destroy the results of all qualities associated with maya. He will stop everything that results from action. He will withdraw from all kinds of food. He will be as immobile as a pillar. He will abandon all action and you should not become an impediment to him. O king! On the fifth day from today, he will give up his body for the hereafter and it will be reduced to ashes. In the cottage, the body of the husband will be burnt down in a fire. [314] Standing outside, the virtuous wife will see the fire and follow her husband into the fire. O descendant of the Kuru lineage! Vidura will hear about this wonderful account. Therefore, filled with joy and sorrow, he will go and visit the tirthas." Having said this, with Tumburu, Narada ascended to heaven. Yudhishthira's heart accepted his words and he cast aside all sorrow.'

Chapter 1(14)

Suta said, 'Jishnu went to Dvaraka, wishing to see his friend and relatives and to know what Punyashloka [315] Krishna would do. Several months passed, but Arjuna did not return. The extender of the Kuru lineage [316] witnessed portents that were terrible in form. The progress of time became terrible and the natural advent of the seasons turned contrary. Men became wicked in conduct and were full of anger, greed and falsehood. Even among well-wishers, transactions were generally characterized by deceit, mixed with fraud. There was dissension between fathers, mothers, well-wishers, brothers, and husband and wife. In the course of time, people became naturally prone to avarice and other kinds of adharma. On witnessing these inauspicious portents, the king spoke to his younger brother. [317]

'Yudhishthira said, "Jishnu was sent to Dvaraka because he wished to see his relatives and to find out what Punyashloka Krishna would do. O Bhimasena! Seven months have passed, but your younger brother has not returned. I do not know the true reason for this. Has the time the devarshi [318] told us about arrived, when the illustrious one desires to cast aside his body, which he had himself assumed in his pastimes? Our prosperity, kingdom, wives, lineage, subjects, victory over the enemy and the worlds are because of his favours. O tiger among men! Behold the terrible omens in heaven, the earth and our bodies. They are confounding our intelligence and telling us that fear is not very far away. My thigh, eye and arm are repeatedly quivering. [319] My heart is trembling. These signify something disagreeable. This female jackal is howling in the direction of the sun and its mouth is vomiting fire. O dear one! Without any fear, this dog is barking at me. O tiger among men! Auspicious animals are passing me on the left, while the others are passing me on the right. On seeing me, my mounts seem to be weeping. This pigeon is a messenger of death. This owl is making my mind tremble. The owl's rival [320] is shrieking, as if it wishes to render everything empty. The directions are covered in smoke. The earth, with its mountains, is quaking. O son! [321] There is a great storm, with the sound of thunder. A wind

harsh to the touch is blowing. Dust is creating darkness. In every direction, the clouds are showering down blood, creating terror. Behold. The sun has lost its splendour. In the sky, the planets are fighting amongst themselves. The area between heaven and earth seems to be full of large numbers of blazing demons. The calves are not sucking at the udders. The mothers are not yielding milk. With their faces full of tears, the cows are weeping. The bulls are no longer happy in the pastures. The images of the gods seem to be weeping, perspiring and moving. The countryside, villages, cities, gardens, mines and hermitages have lost their prosperity and are cheerless. What futility is it displaying to us? Indeed, because of these great portents, I think that the earth will be robbed of its good fortune and prosperity. It will lose this unique being and the illustrious one's feet."'

Suta said, 'O brahmana! Witnessing these ominous signs, this is what the king thought in his mind. At that time, the one with the ape on his banner [322] returned from the city of the Yadus. He fell down at his feet and this kind of affliction had never occurred earlier. His face was downcast and tears descended from his lotus eyes. On seeing that his younger brother was like a shadow, the king was anxious in his heart. He remembered what Narada had said. In the midst of the well-wishers, he asked him.

'Yudhishthira asked, "In the city of the Anartas, are our relatives, Madhus, Bhojas, Dasharhas, Arhas, Satvatas, Andhakas and Vrishnis, residing happily? Is my revered maternal grandfather, Shura, [323] well? Is my maternal uncle, Anakadundubhi, [324] well, along with his younger brothers? His seven wives, our aunts, are sisters. With Devaki as the foremost, are they hale? Are their sons and daughters-in-law well? Are King Ahuka, [325] whose son was wicked, and his younger brother alive? What about Hridika and his son, Akrura, Jayanta, Gada and Sarana? [326] Are Shatrujit and the others well? Are Rama and the illustrious lord of the Satvatas well? Is Pradyumna, a maharatha among the Vrishnis, happy? Is the deep and dexterous Aniruddha, the illustrious one's descendant, growing up? Are Sushena, Charudeshna, Samba, Jambavati's son, and the other bulls among the foremost of Krishna's sons well, along with their sons? What about Shouri's followers, Shrutadeva, Uddhava, Sunanda, Nanda and the others and other foremost

bulls among the Satvatas? Are all those who seek refuge in the arms of Rama and Krishna well? Bound to us in affection, do they remember our welfare? The illustrious Govinda is devoted to brahmanas and his devotees. Surrounded by his well-wishers, is he happy in the city, in Sudharma? [327] For the welfare of the people and the benefit of the earth, the original being has resided in the ocean that is the lineage of the Yadus, along with Ananta's friend. [328] He has dwelt in his own city, worshipped by the Yadus, who have been protected by the rod of chastisement exerted by his arms. Like great beings, they have sported in great delight. There were sixteen thousand women, Satya [329] and the others. Their foremost task was to serve at his feet. In a battle, he defeated the residents of heaven and seized that which the wives of the wielder of the *vajra* enjoyed. [330] The foremost among the Yadus sustained their lives on the basis of the rod of chastisement his arms exercised. They could stride in the assembly hall known as Sudharma, deserved by the best among the gods, which had been seized through force. O son! [331] Tell me if you are well. To me, your radiance seems to have lost its energy. O son! Because you resided there for a long time, were you dishonored and ignored? Were you struck by inauspicious sentiments and words? After having taken a pledge, were you unable to give a suppliant what he wished for? Were you unable to give protection to a brahmana, a child, a cow, an aged person, a diseased person, a woman or some other living being who sought refuge? Did you have intercourse with someone you shouldn't have had intercourse with? Have you shown disrespect to a woman? Along the road, were you defeated by someone who was an equal or an inferior? Have you eaten while ignoring the aged and children who deserved to be fed? Have you committed a reprehensible and unpardonable deed? He was the beloved person in your heart. Do you think that you are without a protector and everything is empty because you are separated from him? There can be no other reason for this dejection."'

Chapter 1(15)

Suta said, 'In this way, the king who was his brother speculated, based on many kinds of doubts and spoke to the Krishna [332] who was Krishna's friend and was afflicted by grief at being separated from Krishna. His face was dry with grief. Like a plucked lotus, he had lost his radiance. Remembering the lord, he was incapable of saying anything in reply. He controlled his sorrow with great difficulty. He wiped his eyes with his hands. Since the object of his affection was absent, he became increasingly anxious and miserable. He remembered the friend, companion, well-wisher and charioteer. In a voice that choked with tears, he spoke to his elder brother, the king.

'Arjuna said, "O great king! I have been deceived by Hari, who appeared in the form of a friend. He is the one who has deprived me of my great energy, which astounded even the gods. Separation from him, even for an instant, makes all the worlds unpleasant to see. It is just as a person without the breath of life, who is spoken of as dead. At the forefront of the svayamvara, there were kings who had arrived in Drupada's house, impossible to crush because of their desire. It is by resorting to him that I robbed them of their energy and was able to strike the fish, stringing my bow and winning Krishna. [333] It was because of his presence that I was able to quickly defeat Indra and large numbers of immortals and bestow Khandava on Agni. [334] I obtained the assembly hall fashioned by Maya, [335] extraordinary in artisanship because of his maya. That is where kings assembled from all the directions and offered tributes to you. O noble one! It is through his energy that your younger brother [336] possessed the spirit and valour of ten thousand elephants. For the sake of a great sacrifice, there was one [337] who placed his feet on the heads of kings. He abducted these kings for a sacrifice to the lord of the *pramatha*s. [338] He killed him and released them [339] and they offered tributes to you. On the occasion of the great sacrifice for the consecration, your wife's hair was braided. That beautiful braid of hair was praiseworthy and was touched and dragged by the deceitful ones in the assembly hall. With tears flowing from her face, she fell down at his [340] feet. It was he who killed them and their women had loosened hair. [341] He protected us from an extremely dangerous calamity in the forest. Plotted by the enemy,

Durvasa, who should eat first, arrived with ten thousand disciples. [342] He ate the leftover vegetables and the three worlds were satisfied. While their bodies were submerged in the water, they thought that they were also satisfied. It is through his energy that I could surprise the illustrious wielder of the trident [343] and the daughter of the mountain [344] in an encounter and he gave me his own weapon. [345] I reached the great Indra's residence in my physical body. I obtained half of his throne and weapons from others. O Ajamidha! While I resided there, the gods used the power of my arms, marked with imprints left by Gandiva, to slay the enemies of the gods. He is the one who made it possible for Indra to find support in me. Today, I am deprived of that supreme Purusha. The army of the Kurus was like an impassable and spirited ocean. It was because of his friendship that I was able to cross it, alone on a chariot. I seized a lot of riches that belonged to the enemy. I robbed them of their energy and seized the bejewelled diadems from their heads. That large array had Bhishma, Karna, the preceptor [346] and Shalya. There were other noble kings in a circle of chariots. O lord! He proceeded ahead of me and through his glance, robbed the leaders among the charioteers of their minds, lifespans and energy. The weapons of the asuras could not touch Nrihari's servant. [347] In that way, great weapons that were invincible in form were unleashed on me by the preceptor, Bhishma, Karna, Drona's son, Trigarta, [348] Shalya, Saindhava, [349] Bahlika and others. But they could not harm me. He is the lord who delivered me. It is through evil intelligence that I engaged him as a charioteer. Those who are fortunate worship his lotus feet so that they are not born again. When my mounts were exhausted, I descended from the chariot on to the ground. [350] My mind was distracted and it is through his favours that the enemy could not strike me. O lord of men! His words were generous, adorned with a sweet smile. In sport, he addressed me as, 'O Partha! O Arjuna! O friend! O descendant of the Kuru lineage!' That conversation touched my heart. On remembering Madhava's words, my heart is overwhelmed. We slept, sat, walked, conversed, ate and did other things together. Truly, evil in intelligence, I misbehaved with him. But like a friend unto a friend and a father unto a son, in his great glory and affection, he pardoned all this. O Indra among men! I am

now separated from Purushottama. He was my beloved friend and well-wisher and my heart is empty. I was protecting the bodies of Urukrama's wives. However, like a woman, I was defeated by wicked cowherds. [351] I have the same bow and arrows, the same chariot and horses. I am the same charioteer to whom the kings bowed down. But in an instant, without him, all that became useless, like oblations rendered into ashes, the act of a juggler, or sowing seeds on barren land. O king! You asked about our well-wishers in the city of well-wishers. Because of the curse of brahmanas, they slew each other with their fists. Having drunk *varuni* liquor, their minds were maddened and intoxicated and they did not recognize each other. Only four or five are left. It is almost as if this was a deed done by the illustrious lord. Sometimes, creatures kill each other and sometimes, they protect each other. O king! In the water, large aquatic creatures swallow smaller ones. The large and the strong eat the weak and the feeble. Thus, the lord made strong Yadavas kill others and made the Yadavas kill each other. In the past too, he reduced the burden of the earth in this way. I remember the words spoken to me by Govinda, full of meaning that was appropriate to the time and the place. As I remember them, my torment is extinguished and my mind is enchanted."'

Suta said, 'Thus, Jishnu thought about Krishna's lotus feet. Because of his extremely deep affection, his mind became peaceful and clear. He meditated on Vasudeva's feet and his devotion and intelligence rapidly increased and became unlimited, it having subsided earlier. In the forefront of the battle, the illustrious one had sung of the knowledge. [352] In the course of time and deeds, it had become enveloped in darkness. [353] But the lord revived it again. He lost his sorrow and attained the brahman. All his doubts about duality were destroyed. He merged and lost all qualities associated with Prakriti. Since he transcended the physical body, he would not be born again. Having heard about the path taken by the illustrious one and about the end of the Yadu lineage, in seclusion, Yudhishthira made up his mind about the path he would himself take. Pritha heard what Dhananjaya had said about the destruction of the Yadus and the destination taken by the illustrious one. She was single-minded in her devotion to the illustrious Ad-

hokshaja. With concentration, she thus withdrew from the material world. A thorn is removed with a thorn. In that way, the one who has no birth gave up the body he used to remove the earth's burden. He is the one who controlled both equally. [354] Like an actor, he assumed many different forms, a fish and others. [355] He assumed those bodies to relieve the earth of its burdens. The illustrious Mukunda's deeds are worth hearing about. When he left the earth and his body, on that day, Kali manifested itself. It is the cause of wicked action by those whose intelligence is imperfectly developed. The intelligent Yudhishthira discerned the increasing spread of avarice, falsehood, deceitfulness, violence and adharma in the city, the kingdom and homes and in his own soul. He donned an attire that was appropriate to his departure. In his own kingdom, he instated his grandson, [356] who was like his own self in the possession of excellent qualities. He was instated on the throne in Gajasahvya and became the lord of the earth, up to the frontiers of the ocean. Vajra [357] was instated in Mathura, as the lord of the Shurasenas. Having performed a *prajapatya* sacrifice, the lord then drank up the fires. [358] He gave up his garments, bracelets and similar things. He gave up all sense of self and ego. He severed all the bonds that remained. He offered his speech into his mind and his mind into *prana*. [359] He offered *apana* to death and offered death to *panchatva*. [360] The sage then offered panchatva into the three [361] and into the unity. He offered everything into the atman and the atman into the undecaying brahman. He attired himself in bark and controlled his food. He restrained his speech and his hair was loose. He showed himself in a form that was like that of a dumb or mad person, or a *pishacha*. [362] He did not expect anything from anyone. Like a person who was deaf, he did not hear. He entered the northern direction, one traversed by great-souled ones earlier. Wherever he went, in his heart, he meditated on the supreme brahman. All his brothers saw that Kali, the friend of adharma, had touched the subjects on earth. They made up their minds to follow him. All of them had performed virtuous deeds. They knew in their inner souls that Vaikuntha's lotus feet was the objective of everything and they fixed this in their minds. Their intelligence was purified and their devotion increased because of the meditation. They single-mindedly fixed themselves on

Narayana's feet as the destination. They reached a state that is extremely difficult for wicked ones attached to material objects to attain. Their sins were cleansed and they reached a state where they were free from all taints. Vidura also gave up his body in Prabhasa. His consciousness was submerged in Krishna. With the ancestors, he went to his own abode. [363] Droupadi saw that her husbands were ignoring her. Single-mindedly, she fixed herself on the illustrious Vasudeva and obtained him. This is the account of the departure of Pandu's sons, loved by the illustrious one. It is sacred and brings good fortune. If a person listens to it faithfully and frequently, he obtains devotion to Hari and success.'

Chapter 1(16)

Suta said, 'Parikshit was devoted to the extremely illustrious one and ruled the earth in accordance with the teachings of the noble brahmanas. O brahmana! He exhibited the great qualities which had been foretold by learned and accomplished ones at the time of his birth. He married Uttara's daughter, Iravati. [364] He had four sons, Janamejaya and the others. He made Sharadvata [365] his preceptor and performed three horse sacrifices on the banks of the Ganga, donating a lot of gifts. The gods showed themselves at these. On one occasion, in the course of his conquests, the brave one used his energy to capture Kali. He was a shudra, in the form of a king, and was kicking a cow and a bull with his feet.'

Shounaka asked, 'In the course of his conquest, why did the king capture Kali? [366] After all, the wicked shudra was in the form of a king and had kicked a cow with his feet. O immensely fortunate one! Is that story connected with accounts about Krishna? Or is it about the virtuous ones who lick the honey from his lotus feet? What is the point of wasting one's lifespan on other impermanent topics that decay and are not permanent? O best among men! The lifespan is limited and mortal ones desire amrita. Illustrious Death has been invited here for rites connected with the sacrifice of animals. Therefore, no one is going to die as long as Death is here. O illustri-

ous one! That is the reason the supreme rishis have summoned you, so that the world of men can drink the wonderful and immortal words about Hari's pastimes. The wicked, evil in intelligence, have a lifespan that is evil and limited. Their nights pass in sleeping and their days in futile deeds.'

Suta replied, 'Parikshit was residing in Kurujangala and heard that Kali had entered his own dominion. This news was unpleasant. The brave one picked up his bow and arrow. He left the city on an ornamented chariot that was yoked to dark horses, with a lion on the standard. He was surrounded by chariots, horses, elephants and foot soldiers. With his own army, he set out on this conquest. He conquered Bhadrashva, Ketumala, Bharata, Uttara Kuru, Kimpurusha and other territories and received tribute. Here and there, he heard the fame of his great-souled ancestors being sung, signifying Krishna's greatness. He heard about himself being saved from the energy of Ashvatthama's weapon, about the affection between the Vrishnis and the Parthas and their devotion towards Keshava. He was extremely satisfied at this and his eyes dilated in affection. The great-minded one gave away a large amount of riches, garments and necklaces. The universe bows down before Vishnu and he heard about how he had been a charioteer, a companion, an attendant, a friend, a guard and a follower, out of affection towards the sons of Pandu, praising them and bowing down before them. The king thus became devoted to his lotus feet. He was following the conduct of his ancestors. However, not very far away, an extraordinary event occurred. Hear about it. Dharma was wandering around on a single foot [367] and approached the earth, in the form of a grieving cow. Her face was covered with tears, like a mother separated from her calf and he questioned her. Dharma asked, "O fortunate one! Are you not well? Your face is distressed and pale. I can discern some kind of agony in you. O mother! Are you grieving because your relative is far away? Are you grieving because I have a single foot and have lost my other feet? Do you perceive that you will be devoured by *vrishala*s? [368] Alas! Have gods and others lost their shares in sacrifices? Are the subjects suffering because Maghavan [369] is not showering down? O earth! Are you grieving because women and children are not protected by men and are afflicted? Is the goddess of speech present in the

families of brahmanas who perform perverse deeds? Is it because the foremost of brahmanas now have to serve the families of kings? Is it because the worst of kshatriyas [370] have been touched by Kali and the kingdoms are therefore in disarray? In the world of the living, here and there, people are eagerly engaged in eating, drinking, dressing, bathing and sexual intercourse. [371] O mother! O earth! Hari assumes a form and descends to remove the burden of the earth. He has vanished. Are you remembering all that he did and the deeds the liberation is dependent on? O earth! Tell me the cause of your distress. Why are you suffering? Time is the strongest among the strong. O mother! Has it taken away your good fortune, worshipped even by the gods?" The earth replied, "O Dharma! You know everything that you have asked me about. It is because of him [372] that you possessed the four feet which brought happiness to the worlds. O lord! Truth, purity, compassion, patience, renunciation, satisfaction, uprightness, concentration, self-control, austerities, impartiality, tolerance, indifference, learning, knowledge, non-attachment, prosperity, valour, energy, strength, perception, independence, dexterity, beauty, fortitude, ingenuity, gentleness, good conduct, skill, execution, enjoyment, depth, poise, belief, fame, pride and other great qualities always existed in him and never decayed. These are desired by those who aspire for greatness. He was the reservoir of these qualities. He was the abode of Shri. I am grieving because the world is deprived of him and because Kali has cast its wicked glance. I am grieving about myself and about you, supreme among the immortals and about the gods, the ancestors, the rishis, all the virtuous ones, the varnas and the ashramas. Desiring Shri's sidelong glances, Brahma and the others performed austerities for many days. However, she left her own abode in a grove of lotuses and faithfully and devotedly sought refuge and good fortune at the illustrious one's feet. My body was ornamented with the prosperous and illustrious one's feet, with the marks of the lotus, the thunderbolt, the goad and the flag. Thus, I possessed a beauty that surpassed that of the three worlds. However, because I was arrogant, at the end he forsook me. I suffered excessively from the lineages of asura kings. But the self-reliant one destroyed one hundred of their akshouhinis. You also suffered because of your feet. But he as-

sumed a beautiful form in the lineage of the Yadus and used his manliness to relieve you. Who can tolerate separation from Purushottama? His glance is full of love, his smile is beautiful and his conversation is sweet. His gravity and passion conquered the pride of the women of the Madhu lineage. Because I was marked with his footprints, my body hair [373] stood up in delight." The earth and Dharma conversed in this fashion. At that time, the royal sage named Parikshit reached Sarasvati, which flowed in an eastern direction.'

Chapter 1(17)

Suta said, 'There, the king saw the cow and the bull being struck, as if they were without a protector. He saw the Vrishala with a rod in his hand, in the garb of a king. The bull was as white as a white lotus and was passing urine in its fear. Struck by the shudra, it trembled and was suffering, standing on one leg. The cow was milked for dharma. [374] Struck by the shudra's foot, it was severely distressed. It was separated from its calf and its face was full of tears. It was weak and desired some fodder. He was astride his chariot, with an armour made out of molten gold. Wielding a bow, he asked in a voice that rumbled like thunder. "Who are you? This world is under my protection. You are strong and are using your strength to injure weak ones. You are in the attire of a lord of men, like an actor. But your action is like that of a person who is not a *dvija*. [375] Who are you? Krishna and the wielder of the Gandiva have gone far away. This is deplorable. In a secluded place, you are striking the innocent. You deserve to be killed. O one who is as white as a white lotus! [376] You have lost your feet and are roaming around on one foot. You are making us grieve. Are you a god in the form of a bull? As long as this land is protected by valiant Indras among the Kouravas, with your exception, tears of sorrow do not fall down on the surface of the ground. O Surabhi's son! [377] Do not grieve. Let there be no fear on account of the Vrishala. O mother! [378] O fortunate one! Do not weep. I am here to chastise the wicked. O virtuous one! If a king is intoxicated and

all the subjects and virtuous ones are terrified in his kingdom, his deeds, lifespan, good fortune and destination [379] are destroyed. It is the supreme dharma of kings to alleviate the afflicted and punish those who cause affliction. Therefore, I will slay this wicked one, who is causing injury to creatures. O four-legged son of Surabhi! Who severed three of your legs? In the kingdom of a king who follows Krishna, let there be no one in this state. O bull! O fortunate one! You are virtuous and innocent. Tell me who disfigured you and tainted the deeds of the Parthas. Those who cause sufferings to innocent creatures face fear from me and everywhere else. [380] By subduing the wicked, the welfare of the virtuous is ensured. If an uncontrolled person causes offence to innocent creatures, I shall tear apart his arms, with the bracelets, even if he happens to be an immortal himself. The supreme dharma for a king is to protect those who follow their own dharma and follow the sacred texts and chastise the others who deviate from the path."

'Dharma said, "These words, which dispel the fear of those who are afflicted, are worthy of someone from the Pandava lineage. It is because of their extensive qualities that the illustrious Krishna acted as their messenger and performed other deeds. O bull among men! We do not know the being who caused our hardship. We are confused because different doctrines do not agree. Some who deny duality say that one is the master of one's atman. [381] Others think of destiny. Others mention action. [382] Some others think that nature is the master. [383] Some have determined that this cannot be decided through reasoning and arguments. O royal sage! That being the case, use your own intelligence to judge." O supreme among brahmanas! Dharma said this to the emperor, who controlled his mind and replied without any confusion. The king replied, "O one who knows about dharma. You are speaking about dharma. You are Dharma, in the form of a bull. If a person speaks about a place where adharma has been perpetrated, he obtains the same destination. [384] Or indeed, it may be the case that the path of the god's maya cannot be fathomed. Creatures cannot ascertain this through their intelligence and their words. In krita yuga, austerities, purity, compassion and truth constituted your four feet. Three of them were broken through adharma—arrogance, sexual intercourse and intoxication. O Dharma! You now

subsist on your single foot of truth. But adharma in the form of the thriving Kali's deceit is trying to destroy that too. The great burden of the earth has been removed by the illustrious one and by others. When the prosperous one was present, everything was rendered auspicious because of his footprints. But the virtuous one has been left desolate. The unfortunate one is grieving and shedding tears. Shudras are enjoying her and those who are not devoted to brahmanas are pretending to be kings." In this way, the maharatha comforted Dharma and the earth. He seized his sharp sword to act against Kali, the cause of adharma.

'Knowing that he [385] was going to kill him, he abandoned his garb of a king and full of fear, approached him, bowing his head down at his feet. The brave one was compassionate and caring about those who were distressed. He saw that he had fallen down at his feet, seeking refuge. Therefore, he did not kill him. He seemed to smile and said, "I am upholding Gudakesha's [386] fame. Someone who has joined his hands in supplication need have no fear. However, you are a friend of adharma. Therefore, you should never remain in my dominion. While you were present in the body of a king, there was adharma among the masses—avarice, falsehood, theft, lack of nobility, sinfulness, misfortune, cheating, conflict and arrogance. O friend of adharma! You should not exist in a place like Brahmavarta where there is dharma and truth and those who know about sacrifices perform sacrifices to the lord of sacrifices. The illustrious Hari is worshipped there through sacrifices and he brings welfare to those who perform sacrifices to his different forms, so that their desires are met. Like the wind, his atman is inside and outside mobile and immobile objects." Thus commanded by Parikshit, Kali started to tremble. He saw that he held an upraised sword, like the wielder of the rod. [387] Kali said, "O supreme emperor! Even if I follow your command, regardless of where I dwell, I will see you there, with a bow and arrows. O supreme among the upholders of dharma! Therefore, you should indicate the best place for me. I will control myself and reside there, abiding by your command." Thus requested, he indicated four kinds of places for adharma—where there is gambling, where there is drinking, women and slaughterhouses. Requested once again, the lord gave him a

place where there is gold. In such a place, falsehood, intoxication, desire, passion and enmity, as the fifth, exist. Uttara's son indicated these five places as areas Kali could reside in and show its powers of adharma. Therefore, these should never be frequented by a man who desires his own welfare, in particular, by a king who is devoted to dharma and is a preceptor and master of men. He restored the three feet of the bull that had got destroyed—austerities, purity and compassion. He also comforted the earth and ensured its prosperity. Right now, he rules from a throne that is appropriate for a king, after his grandfather, [388] the king, wished to go to the forest and entrusted this to him. The royal sage, Indra among the Kouravas, spreads prosperity now. The immensely fortunate one is extremely famous and is the emperor in Gajasahvya. Such has been the experience of the king who is Abhimanyu's son. Since he protects the earth, you have been able to consecrate yourselves for this sacrifice.'

Chapter 1(18)

Suta said, 'Through the illustrious Krishna's favours, whose deeds are extraordinary, though he was burnt by the weapon of Drona's son, he did not die in his mother's womb. His life was destroyed because he invoked a brahmana's rage and because of Takshaka. Despite this, he was not overwhelmed by confusion and fear and surrendered himself to the illustrious one. He knew the status of the one who cannot be conquered [389] and gave up all attachment. Becoming a disciple of Vyasa's son, [390] he gave up his body in the Ganga. If one is engaged in the immortal account of the one who is spoken about in excellent shlokas, there is no fear, even at the time of death, since one remembers his lotus feet. As long as Abhimanyu's great and powerful son is the single emperor, till then, Kali's powers cannot enter anywhere in this world. On the day and the instant the illustrious one left the earth, Kali, whose powers lead to adharma, entered here. Like a bee that extracts the essence, [391] the emperor did not hate Kali. He knew that good deeds become successful quickly, while inferior deeds do not, until per-

formed. [392] What can Kali do? It is brave before children and timid before those who are patient and not distracted. Like a wolf, it exists among men who are distracted. I have described to you the sacred account of Parikshit and Vasudeva. That is the account you asked me about. Men who desire their benefit should hear about the illustrious one's account, Urukrama's praiseworthy deeds and the qualities and action he resorted to.'

The rishis responded, 'O Suta! O amiable one! May you live for an eternal number of years, especially because you have spoken about Krishna's fame. For us mortals, this is like amrita. The outcome of the ritual we have started is uncertain. Because of the fumes, we have ourselves become covered in smoke. You have given us the intoxicating honey from Govinda's lotus feet. Even for an instant, heaven, or the possibility of no more rebirth, is not comparable with the companionship of someone who is devoted to the illustrious one. What else brings benefit to mortals? His qualities are infinite. Foremost lords of yoga, like Bhava and the one who was born from the lotus [393] cannot approach his qualities. He is alone the refuge for all great beings. No discriminating person will be satisfied at hearing about his account. You are foremost among those who are devoted to him. He is the only refuge for those who are great. O learned one! The extensive Hari's conduct is pure and we wish to hear about it. Therefore, tell us. Parikshit, unwavering in his intelligence, was a great devotee and used the knowledge of that account, imparted by Vyasa's son, to obtain liberation. He obtained the feet of the one who has the Indra among birds [394] on his banner. The account of the Bhagavata, full of the conduct of the infinite one, was told to Parikshit. It is extraordinary and is loved by those who are devoted to yoga. It is supremely pure. Therefore, without concealing anything, tell us.'

Suta said, 'This is wonderful. By following those who are wise, a person like me, born inferior, has been uplifted beyond his birth. The disqualification of birth is quickly purified if one has a conversation and association with great ones. [395] What need be said about someone who chants the name of someone who is the only refuge for those who are great? The illustrious and infinite one is infinite in his strength. He is known as the infinite one [396] because he possesses all the great qualities. His qualities are unmatched and

superior to those of anyone else. Though he doesn't desire it, prosperity [397] desires the dust of his feet, forgetting others. It is sufficient to state this. The water flowing from the nails of his feet has been collected by Virinchi [398] and used for worship, purifying the universe and Shiva. In this universe, who other than Mukunda can be given the status of the illustrious one? Patient ones who are devoted to him can suddenly cast aside foolish attachment to the body and other things. [399] They thus reach the state of being *paramahamsa*. [400] The natural dharma then is non-violence and tranquility. O those who are like the sun! You have asked me and I will tell you as much as I know. Just as birds rise up into the sky to the best of their strength, learned ones obtain Vishnu to the extent of their capacity. Once, he [401] raised his bow and was roaming around on a hunt in the forest. Following a deer, he became extremely tired, hungry and thirsty. Unable to see any water, he entered a hermitage. [402] He saw a tranquil sage seated there, with his eyes closed. His senses and breath of life were restrained and his intelligence was withdrawn. [403] He was in a state beyond the three, [404] unaffected and merged into the brahman. He was covered in dishevelled and matted hair and wore the hide of a *ruru* antelope. The king's palate was dry and he asked him for water. He was not offered grass, earth, [405] *arghya* [406] or sweet words. He thought that he was being ignored and became angry. O brahmana! The king was afflicted by hunger and thirst. He suddenly felt intolerance and anger towards the brahmana, something that had never happened to him before. There was a lifeless snake. In his rage, as he left, he picked it up with the end of his bow, strung it around the brahmana rishi's neck and went to his city. "Was he meditating, having controlled his senses, or were his eyes merely closed? Or was he pretending to meditate because he did not wish to engage with an inferior kshatriya?" [407] His [408] son was extremely energetic, though a child. At that time, he was playing with other children. Hearing that his father had been oppressed by the king, at that place, he said the following. "Alas! The adharma of those who are supposed to protect has become as plump as a crow. This is like a servant acting against his master, or a dog acting against the doorkeeper. Brahmanas have appointed kshatrabandhus as the guards of houses. In that house, how does a doorkeeper de-

serve to eat from the same vessel? The illustrious Krishna, the chastiser of those who follow perverse paths, has departed. Therefore, I will protect the rules today. Behold my strength." The son of the rishi said this to his friends, his eyes coppery red with rage. He touched the waters of the Koushiki [409] and released words that were like the vajra. "The one who has caused the injury, the worst of his lineage, has transgressed the rules. Therefore, urged by me, on the seventh day from today, Takshaka will bite him." The child went to the hermitage and saw his father, with the dead body of the snake around his neck. He was afflicted by grief and wept loudly. O brahmana! Angiras's descendant heard his son lamenting. He opened his eyes slowly and saw the dead snake around his neck. He hurled it away and asked, "O child! Why are you crying? Who has harmed you?" Thus asked, he [410] reported what had happened. The Indra among men should not have been cursed. On hearing, the brahmana did not applaud his son. He said, "Alas! Today, you have done something distressing. You have imposed a grave punishment for a small injury. O one whose intelligence is not yet ripe! A king is supreme and should not be equated with other men. His energy is impossible to withstand. Protected by him, subjects are without fear and obtain benefits. O dear one! The one with the chakra in his hand can no longer be seen and in this world, the king is his representative. There are plenty of thieves and he destroys them. If we are not protected by him, in an instant, we will be like sheep without a leader. That is the reason, from today, wickedness will descend on us. Our protector will be destroyed and our riches will be plundered. People will kill and strike each other. People will be like great bandits and steal animals, women and riches. Thus, noble dharma and conduct of the varnas and the ashramas, propounded in the three, [411] will decay among men. They will immerse themselves in artha and kama, like dogs and monkeys, and there will be a mixing up of the varnas. The lord of men is a protector of dharma. He is an emperor and great in his learning. He is a great devotee of the illustrious one himself. He is a royal sage and has performed horse sacrifices. He was hungry, thirsty and distressed. He did not deserve to be cursed." "O illustrious one! [412] O one who is in all our atmans! He is a child whose intelligence has not yet ripened. He

has committed a crime and harmed your own servant. You should pardon him. Because of your favours, your devotees do not strike back, even if they are abused, cheated, cursed, insulted or struck." Thus, the great sage repented the harm done by his son. Though he had been injured by the king, he did not think about that injury at all. In general, the virtuous ones in this world are engaged by others to take part in the opposites. [413] They resort to the qualities of the atman and are neither distressed, nor delighted.'

Chapter 1(19)

Suta said, 'The king thought about the reprehensible deed that he had himself done and was distressed in his mind. "Alas! I have acted like an ignoble and inferior person. The brahmana was innocent and his energy is deep. Because of what I have done, it is certain that I have shown contempt for the god. [414] Fairly soon, there will be a calamity that will be impossible to cross. I desire that I should be freed from my sin, so that I do not commit anything like this again. Let the angry fire of the lineage of the brahmana burn down my kingdom, army, riches and treasury today, so that nothing inauspicious happens to me again and so that my wicked intelligence does not turn against brahmanas, gods and cows again." As he was thinking in this way, he heard what the sage's son said, about his death in the form of Takshaka. He was indifferent about Takshaka soon becoming the cause. He thought it was good that this would trigger non-attachment. Therefore, he gave up this world and the next. He determined that these were inferior to what was before him, since he thought that serving at Krishna's feet was the best. Along the banks of the immortal river, [415] he seated himself in praya. Which man, who is about to die, will not serve it? Mixed with *tulasi* [416] leaves and the dust of Krishna's feet, its waters are rendered even more beautiful and sanctify both the worlds and Isha. [417] The descendant of the Pandava lineage decided in this way. He sat down in praya on the banks of the one flowing from Vishnu's feet. He single-mindedly gave himself up to

Mukunda's feet. He resorted to the vow of sages and freed himself from all attachments.

'Great-minded sages, capable of purifying the universe, arrived there, with their disciples. Though they themselves purified tirthas, they generally went to regions where there were tirthas. There were Atri, Vasishtha, Chyavana, Sharadvana, Arishtanemi, Bhrigu, Angiras, Parashara, Gadhi's son, [418] Rama, [419] Utathya, Indrapramada, Idhmavahu, Medhatithi, Devala, Arshtishena, Bharadvaja, Goutama, Pippalada, Maitreya, Ourva, Kavasha, Kumbhayoni, Dvaipayana and the illustrious Narada. There were other divine rishis and noble brahmana rishis, noble royal sages, Arunas and others. [420] Many foremost rishis assembled. The king bowed his head down and greeted and worshipped them. When all of them were happily seated, having worshipped them, the king told them about what he desired to do. With his mind detached, he joined his hands in salutation before the ones who were in front of him.

'The king said, "This is wonderful. I am the most blessed among kings. Our conduct should be to receive the favours of such great ones. The lineages of kings perform reprehensible deeds. [421] They are thrust far away, like that which is used to clean the feet of brahmanas. [422] I have been guilty and the lord of this world and the next has come to me in the form of a brahmana's curse. As a householder, I have always been excessively addicted to material objects. I was attached and the fear that will soon arrive will be the foundation for non-attachment. I have sought refuge and fixed my intelligence on the lord. May the brahmanas and the goddess Ganga accept me in that way. Let the deceitful Takshaka be released by the brahmana. Let it swiftly bite me. Sing the accounts of Vishnu. In whatever form I am born again, let me be attached to the illustrious and infinite one. Let me be associated with those who seek him as a refuge. Wherever I am born, let my association be with those who are great. I bow down to brahmanas." The persevering and patient king handed over the burden [423] to his own son. Facing the north, he sat down on a seat of kusha grass, with the tips of the blades facing the eastern direction. He seated himself on the southern bank of the ocean's wife. [424] When the king, the lord of men, sat down in praya, a large

number of gods assembled in the firmament. They praised him and showered down flowers on earth. Delighted, they repeatedly made drums sound. The assembled maharshis praised him. They said this was virtuous and approved. They were good in conduct and wished to bring benefit to subjects. Therefore, they spoke to him about the qualities of the one who is spoken about in excellent shlokas. "O noble and royal sage! This is not extraordinary. You come from a line that is devoted to Krishna. Though seated on thrones and ornamented with the diadems of kings, desiring the association with the illustrious one, all of you have instantly given it up. All of us will remain here until he gives up his physical body and goes to the other world, freed of all taints and grief. He is foremost among those who are devoted to the illustrious one." Parikshit heard the words of the large number of rishis. The words were not false. They were impartial, deep and sweet as honey. He then wished to hear about Vishnu's conduct. "All of you have assembled here, from all the worlds. You are like the personified forms of the Vedas, which are above the three worlds. In this world, and in the next world, there is no objective that you desire, with the exception of using your good conduct to do favours to others. That is the reason I am asking you about this. O brahmanas! I trust you. I am asking you what a person who is about to die must do with all one's soul, out of the various things that need to be done. Please deliberate about what is pure and appropriate." Detached, Vyasa's illustrious son was roaming around the earth, as he pleased. No marks could be seen on him. [425] He was content with self-realization. He was surrounded by children and was attired like an *avadhuta*. [426] He arrived at the spot.

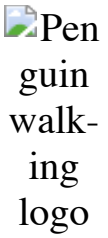
'He was sixteen years old and his feet, hands, thighs, arms, shoulders, forehead and body were delicate. His eyes were large and beautiful. His nose was prominent and his ears were symmetric. He possessed a beautiful face and eyebrows. His well-formed neck was like a conch shell. His collarbones were covered well. His chest was broad and thick. His navel had a whorl and the folds made his belly handsome. He was naked. [427] His curly hair was dishevelled. His arms were long. His complexion was like that of the best among the immortals. He was dark and always extremely attractive

because of his youth and the signs that were on his body. Because of his pleasant smile, women found him to be attractive. Though his radiance was hidden, the sages knew about the signs. The sages rose up from their seats to honour him. Vishnurata [428] bowed his head and entire body down and greeted the guest who had arrived. The ignorant women and children withdrew. [429] Worshipped, he seated himself on an exalted seat. As he deserved, the illustrious greatest of the great was surrounded by large numbers of brahmana rishis, royal sages and divine rishis. He was like the moon, surrounded by a collection of planets, heavenly bodies and stars. Completely at peace, he seated himself. His intelligence was complete. The king, devoted to the illustrious one, approached him. He joined his hands in salutation and bowed his head down in the proper way. Bowing down, he asked in well-articulated words.

'Parikshit said, "O brahmana! This is wonderful. We are inferior kshatriyas, [430] not worthy enough to serve the virtuous. However, because of the compassion you have shown us in the form of a guest, you have made us like tirthas. Even if men remember you, their houses are instantly sanctified, not to speak of seeing you, touching you, washing your feet and offering you a seat. O great yogi! A sinner cannot remain in the presence of someone who is great. Like enemies of the gods in Vishnu's presence, the sins of such people are instantly destroyed. The illustrious Krishna, dear to Pandu's sons, must be pleased. He wishes to please those who are descended from his father's relatives. Otherwise, how can men like us see you, especially those who are about to die? Your movements cannot be discerned. You have become supremely successful and only show yourself when you want. You are the greatest preceptor of the yogis who have become supremely successful. Therefore, I am asking you about the tasks that a person who is about to die must perform. O lord! What should such men hear, chant, do, remember and worship? Also tell me what should be shunned. O illustrious brahmana! You are never seen to remain in the homes of those who are in the householder stage for longer than it takes to milk a cow."'

Suta said, 'The king thus spoke to him and asked in gentle words. Badarayana's illustrious son, who knew about dharma, replied.'

This ends the First Skandha.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Second Skandha

Chapter 2(1): 39 shlokas
Chapter 2(2): 37 shlokas
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Chapter 2(4): 25 shlokas
Chapter 2(5): 42 shlokas
Chapter 2(6): 45 shlokas
Chapter 2(7): 53 shlokas
Chapter 2(8): 29 shlokas
Chapter 2(9): 45 shlokas
Chapter 2(10): 51 shlokas

Chapter 2(1)

‘Shri-Shuka said, “O king! Since it benefits the world, the question that you have asked is excellent. Men who know about the atman approve of it and it is supreme among all the things that should be heard. O Indra among kings! There are thousands of things that deserve to be heard by men, by those who cannot see the truth about the atman, by householders who are attached to objects that householders are interested in. O king! At night, the lifespan is taken away by sleep or by sexual intercourse and during the day, by the pursuit of artha and the maintenance of the family. A person is attached to the body, children, wife and related things and one’s own soldiers, [431] even though these are not permanent. Though he can see that these will be destroyed, he still does not see. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The illustrious lord, Hari, is in all atmans. Therefore, anyone who desires a state of freedom from fear, should hear about him, chant about him and remem-

ber him. Thus, the supreme gain of birth for any man is to remember Narayana at the end. This can be done through samkhya yoga, or by faithfully performing one's own dharma. O king! Generally, sages withdraw themselves from rules and restraints. Basing themselves on the *nirguna*, [432] they find delight in describing Hari's qualities. This Purana named Bhagavata is revered by the brahmanas. [433] At the end of dvapara, I studied this from my father, Dvaipayana. O royal sage! I was firmly established in the nirguna. Even then, I studied this, since my intelligence was attracted to the accounts and pastimes of the one who is described in excellent shlokas. Since you are a devotee of the great one, I will recite it to you. One's intelligence is then swiftly focused on devotion to Mukunda. O king! If a person has freed himself from worldly objects and desires a state of freedom from fear, and for yogis, the chanting of Hari's names has been determined as the best mode. If one is inexperienced and distracted, what is the purpose of many years in this world? [434] It is better to try for a single *muhurta* [435] that is superior. There was a royal sage named Khatvanga, who got to know that he had only one muhurta of lifespan left. He abandoned everything and obtained freedom from fear with Hari. O Kouravya! You have seven days more of your life left. Therefore, you can now perform all the rituals required for welfare in the hereafter. When the end arrives, one should overcome all fear and use the weapon of detachment to sever all desire for the body and anything associated with it. A persevering person must leave home and bathe in the waters of sacred tirthas. He must be seated in a pure and secluded spot, on a seat that has been constructed in the proper way. In his mind, he must practise the three *akshara*s of the supreme brahman. [436] He must control his mind and his breath and not forget the seed of the brahman. He must use his mind to restrain the organs of the senses, which are like wheels. The intelligence is the charioteer. If the mind is addicted to action, he must use his intelligence to fix it on what is auspicious. Therefore, with undivided consciousness, one must meditate on his [437] body, one limb after another. The mind will then be freed from material objects and none of this will be remembered. On attaining Vishnu's supreme state, the mind is delighted. The mind and the atman are confounded and distracted by rajas

and tamas. However, by focusing on meditation, a persevering person can counter these and destroy the taints caused by these. By practising and meditating in this way, yogis quickly develop the characteristics of *bhakti*. [438] On perceiving what is beneficial, they seek refuge in yoga."

'The king asked, "O brahmana! What is the approved method of practising *dharana*? [439] What type swiftly removes the impurities from a man's mind?"

'Shri-Shuka replied, "One must control the *asana* and one must control the breathing. [440] One must conquer attachment and conquer the senses. One must use one's intelligence to fix one's mind on the illustrious one's gross form. [441] This special form is the greatest of the great and the universe of past, present and future consequences is clearly manifested in this form. This body is like an egg and is covered in seven sheaths. [442] This is the illustrious one as Vairaja Purusha [443] and he is the object of dharana. Patala is read as the soles of the feet of the creator of the universe, rasatala as his heels, mahatala as his ankles and talatala as the Purusha's shanks. [444] Sutala constitutes the knees of this universal form, vitala and atala are the two thighs. O lord of the earth! His hips are the surface of the earth [445] and the firmament [446] as the depression of his navel. It is said that the large number of stellar bodies constitute this Purusha's chest, *maharloka* is his neck, *janarloka* is his mouth, *taparloka* is his forehead and *satyaloka* is the crest of this thousand-headed one. [447] Indra and the other resplendent gods are said to be his arms, the directions are his ears and sound is his sense of hearing. Nasatya and Dasra [448] constitute the supreme one's nose. Scent is his sense of smell and the blazing fire is his mouth. His eye pits are the firmament and his eyeballs are the sun. Day and night are Vishnu's eyelashes. Parameshthi [449] resides in his eyebrows and yawning. Water is his palate and taste is his tongue. *Chhanda*s [450] are said to be the aperture in the infinite one's head. [451] His large tusks are Yama and the signs of affection are his teeth. His laugh is the maya that maddens people. His sidelong glance is the never-ending creation. Modesty is his upper lip and greed is his lower lip. His chest is dharma and the path of adharma is his back. Brahma is his penis and Mitra and Varuna are his testicles. The oceans are his belly and the

mountains are his mass of bones. O Indra among kings! The rivers are his veins and the trees are his body hair. His body is the universe. The wind, infinite in force, is his breath. His movement is the passage of time and his deeds result in the flow of qualities. [452] O noble one of the Kuru lineage! The clouds which carry water are the lord's hair. The sandhyas are the garments of the supreme one. It is said the unmanifest one [453] is in his heart and the moon is in his mind, which is the store of all kinds of transformations. It is said that Mahat is the power of his intellect. He resides in all atmans and Rudra is in his inner organs. His nails are horses, mules, camels and elephants. Deer and all other animals are his hips. Birds are his wonderful means of expression. Manu is his power of comprehension and he resides in human beings. Gandharvas, *vidyadhara*s, *charana*s and apsaras [454] are said to be his musical notes and memories. The armies of the asuras are his valour. The great-souled one has the brahmanas as his mouth, the kshatriyas as his arms, the vaishyas as his thighs and the dark-complexioned ones as his feet. [455] All the different categories of gods worshipped under different names constitute his essence. Sacrifices performed with diverse objects constitute his work. I have told you about the way in which the lord's body is spread out. One should focus dharana on this gross form, using one's mind and intelligence. There is nothing beyond this. Just as people see their relatives in dreams, this atman experiences everything through his intelligence and encompasses everything. One must worship him, the true one who is the store of bliss. If one does not want one's own atman to be debased, one should not be attached to anything else."'

Chapter 2(2)

'Shri-Shuka said, "In the past, the one who created himself [456] lost his memory. [457] He used this dharana to contemplate and please him and regained his memory. So as to create again, he obtained his infallible vision and could use his intelligence to create everything as it had been earlier. These paths represent the sound of the brahman and are contemplated on by

all kinds of meaningless names. [458] Even the wise can circle around amidst these, full of maya, and not attain the desired objective, like one who is asleep. Hence, a wise and undistracted person must fix his intelligence only on the names that serve the objective. Otherwise, he will endeavour for that which does not achieve the objective. He must consider the exertion made. When one possesses the flat earth, why should one strive for a bed? When one accomplishes the purpose with one's own arms, what is the need for pillows? When one can use the cups of one's hands, why does one need different kinds of vessels? When the directions [459] and bark can serve the purpose, why does one need garments? Are there no tattered rags along the path? Do the trees, which support others, [460] not provide alms? Have the rivers dried up? [461] Have the caves been closed? [462] Does the unvanquished one not support those who seek refuge with him? Why should wise people serve those who are blind and insolent because of their wealth? In this way, one must search out the truth in one's own heart and become successful in pleasing one's atman by fixing oneself on the illustrious and infinite one. Thus detached, one must always worship the eternal and supreme one, for the sake of being freed from this cycle of life. People fall into the river Vaitarani [463] and are overtaken by repentance because of what they themselves have done. On seeing this, who, except animals, will take the names of things that are not permanent? Some think of Purusha residing in the region of one's own heart, inside one's own body, and only a short span in height. They remember and conceive him as a four-armed one, holding a lotus, a chakra, a conch shell and a club. His face is gracious. His lotus eyes are large. His garments are as tawny [464] as the filament of a *kadamba* flower. He has golden bracelets decorated with expensive jewels. His diadem and earrings sparkle with expensive jewels. There is a blossoming lotus at the centre and the lords of yoga place his delicate feet there. [465] He bears the mark of Shri [466] and wears the Koustubha jewel around his neck. He is beautiful, garlanded with fresh wild flowers. He is adorned with an extremely expensive girdle, rings, anklets, bangles and other ornaments. His glossy and spotless hair is curly and dark blue. His pleasant face is beautiful because of its smile. His generous pastimes, smiles, glances and the move-

ment of his eyebrows indicate his favours. As long as this form can be held in one's mind through dharana, this is the lord's form one must look towards and think about. Step by step, one must use one's intellect to meditate on the limbs of the one who wields the club, from the feet to his smile. After one has successfully meditated on one part, one leaves that and moving up, meditates on another part. In this way, step by step, the intellect is purified. As long as great devotion in the lord of the universe is not generated, the seer of this world and the next must meditate on this gross form of Purusha. After the end of the rituals, he must attentively remember this form. O dear one! Whenever an ascetic desires to give up this world, his mind should not be attached to the time or the place. He must use his mind to control his breath of life and be seated in a pleasant place, without being disturbed. The mind must be controlled through one's own purified intellect. The *kshetrajna* must thus be merged into the atman. [467] The persevering person thus merges the atman into the atman. [468] Having obtained tranquility, he ceases from all action. Time, which can control those who do not blink, [469] has no presence there. Nor do the gods who are regarded as the lords of the universe. There is no sattva, rajas or tamas there. There are no transformations there, no primary and secondary. [470] There are those who wish to avoid that which is non-existent. Therefore, they affectionately fix themselves on the supreme feet of the eternal Vishnu and avoid all other kinds of misconception. Step by step, they accept his revered feet in their hearts. Thus should the sage withdraw and base himself, using the strength and insight of his knowledge and regulating his subsistence. He should use his foot to press down on his anus and conquering all exhaustion, race his breath of life up to the six places. [471] He must push it up from the navel to the heart [472] and from there, the sage will take udana up to the chest. Using his intellect, the spirited one will then search out and slowly convey it to the root of the palate. [473] From there, he will then take it up to between the eyebrows. [474] He will be detached and will control the seven outlets. [475] With an unwavering gaze, he must remain in that position for half a muhurta. He will then penetrate the crown of the head [476] and abandoning everything, obtain the supreme. O king! If he desires to go where Parameshthi [477] is, or to

the places where those in the sky [478] are said to find their pleasure, or become lord over the eight powers, [479] or attain the qualities, [480] he should go there with his mind and his senses. The lords of yoga are said to be those whose breath of life is inside their atmans and therefore, inside and outside the three worlds, using their learning, austerities, yoga and meditation. Those who pursue action cannot travel in this fashion. O king! Such a person first passes through the sky and reaches the place known as Vaishvanara. [481] He passes through *sushumna* and the radiant path of the brahman, cleansed of all dirt. [482] Above that, he goes to the *shaishumara chakra*, which is like the navel of the universe, and is united with Hari. Alone, the atman reaches this subtle and pure form of Vishnu. The learned ones who know about the brahman reach and worship it, delighting themselves there for the duration of one kalpa. At the end of this, they see the universe being consumed by a fire that emanates from Ananta's [483] mouth. These devout lords of success then dwell in Parameshthi's abode [484] for two *parardha*s. [485] There is no sorrow there, nor old age or death. There is no affliction of any kind, with the exception of mental anxiety, resulting out of compassion at the sight of those who do not know about this path and who therefore suffer from the insurmountable miseries of birth and death. In particular, having reached that spot, [486] he is without fear and unites his atman and subtle form with water and slowly thereafter, with fire, energy and wind. In the course of time, he blends with space and merges his atman into that great form. The yogi reaches smell through the sense of smell, taste through the sense of taste, form through sight, the sense of touch through the skin, sound, the quality of the sky, through the sense of hearing and all desires through prana. He withdraws the gross and subtle senses and enters a mental plane that is full of ego and divinity. [487] Having transcended these, he obtains the state of perfect knowledge, where all the qualities are neutralized. The atman finds tranquility in the atman. [488] When everything else ceases, bliss is found in a state of bliss. O dear one! If a person reaches this state of the illustrious one, he does not become attached to this world again. O king! You asked me and I have described to you the eternal path sung about in the Vedas. In ancient times, Brahma worshipped and satisfied the illustrious Va-

sudeva and was told about this. For those who are wandering around in the circle of existence, there is no other path that is auspicious. By resorting to bhakti yoga, one obtains the illustrious Vasudeva. Attentively, the illustrious Brahma examined all this and the three [489] and determined how the mind could be focused, so that there is affection towards the atman. [490] The illustrious Hari can be discerned in all creatures and in their atmans. Those with insight can see this through their intellect and infer it through the signs. O king! Therefore, among men, everywhere and in every place, with all one's soul, the illustrious Hari must be heard about, chanted about and remembered. Virtuous ones use their atmans to drink up the immortal accounts about the illustrious one and their organs of hearing become full. If they are again contaminated by material objects, they go to him and climb up to his lotus feet."'

Chapter 2(3)

'Shri-Shuka said, "This is what you had asked me about, about what learned men should do, especially men who are about to die. One who desires Brahma's radiance should worship the lord Brahma, one who desires the senses, Indra and one who desires offspring should worship the Prajapatis. One who desires prosperity should worship the goddess Maya, [491] one who desires energy Vibhavasu, [492] one who desires wealth should worship the Vasus and one who desires valour should worship the valiant Rudra. One who desires food and similar things should worship Aditi, one who desires heaven should worship Aditi's sons, [493] one who desires a kingdom should worship the Vishvadevas and one who desires to control people should worship the Sadhyas. One who desires a long lifespan should worship the two gods, the Ashvins, one who desires health should worship Ila [494] and a man who desires a steady position should worship the earth and the sky, the mothers of the world. One who desires beauty should worship the gandharvas, one who desires women should worship the apsara Urvashi and one who desires suzerainty over everyone should worship Parameshthi.

One who desires fame should worship Yajna, [495] one who desires treasures should worship Prachetas, [496] one who desires learning should worship Girisha [497] and one who desires a happy marriage should worship Uma. For the sake of dharma one should worship Uttamashloka, [498] for the sake of offspring and their protection one should worship the ancestors, for the sake of protection one must worship virtuous people and for the sake of spirit one must worship the large number of Maruts. One who desires a kingdom must worship the divinity Manu and one who desires to control spells must worship Nirriti. [499] One who desires objects of pleasure must worship Soma and one who seeks freedom from desire must worship the supreme Purusha. A person who is extensive in intelligence and has no desires, or has satisfied all desires, or desires liberation, must worship the supreme Purusha with intense bhakti yoga. In this world, all the people who worship can obtain many kinds of benefit. However, unwavering devotion to the illustrious one only comes through association with the devotees of the illustrious one. Knowledge comes through the suspension of the circling of qualities and it creates self-satisfaction because there is no attachment to the qualities. This is the approved path of bhakti yoga, which leads to emancipation. [500] Who will withdraw from Hari's accounts and who will not be attached to them?"'

Shounaka asked, 'The king, bull among the Bharata lineage, heard all that had been said. What did he next ask the wise rishi who was Vyasa's son? O Suta! O learned one! We wish to hear and you should speak to us about this. Accounts of Hari, and the accounts that follow, must certainly be heard in assemblies of virtuous people. The maharatha king was the illustrious one's devotee. Even as a child, when he used to play with dolls, he used to imitate Krishna's pastimes. Vyasa's illustrious son was devoted to Vasudeva. When there was a meeting of virtuous people, the pervasive qualities of the praiseworthy one must have been spoken about. The rising, setting and movements [501] take away the lifespans of men, with the exception of the time that is spent in conversing about Uttamashloka. Are trees not alive? Do bellows [502] not breathe? Do domestic and other animals not eat and discharge semen? A man whose ears have never heard praises of Gada's elder brother is an animal, like a dog, a boar, a camel, or a donkey. If

a man has not heard about Urukrama's valour, his ears are like a snake's hole. O Suta! If he has never loudly chanted about the praiseworthy one, his tongue is like that of a frog. Even if the head is covered in a headdress or diadem, if it has not bowed down to Mukunda, it is a great burden. Our hands, even if they are adorned with golden bangles, are like the hands of dead bodies if they do not worship Hari. When the eyes of men do not look at Vishnu's signs, they are like the eyes on a peacock. [503] When the feet of men do not go to Hari's kshetras, they are like trunks generated from trees. If a mortal person has not received the dust from the illustrious one's feet, even if he is alive, he is like a corpse. If a man does not know the smell of tulasi leaves placed at the handsome Vishnu's feet, even if he breathes, he is a corpse. If a heart hears Hari's names being chanted with concentration, and is not moved, or is moved but the eyes do not fill with tears, and if the body hair does not stand up in delight, its essence is made out of hard stone. O dear one! Whatever you say pleases our minds, since this was spoken by Vyasa's son, who was learned about the atman and was a foremost devotee of the illustrious one. The virtuous and accomplished one was asked by the king.'

Chapter 2(4)

Suta said, 'Uttara's son heard the words of Vyasa's son and made up his mind to realize the atman by fixing his steady intelligence on Krishna. He gave up his deep-rooted and constant sense of ownership towards his body, his wife, his sons, his palace, his animals, his riches and his kingdom, and was no longer disturbed. O supreme ones! The great-minded one was faithful in thinking and hearing about Krishna. Knowing his imminent state, he renounced all action that led to the three objectives. [504] Just as you have asked me, he asked about the truth. He firmly fixed his atman on devotion towards Vasudeva.

'The king said, "O brahmana! O one who knows about everything! O unblemished one! The words that you have spoken are proper. As you speak

about Hari's account, my darkness [505] is being dispelled. I again wish to know how the illustrious one used his maya to create the universe. This is impossible for even the great lords [506] to comprehend. How does the great one preserve and withdraw again? What strengths does he resort to? The supreme Purusha is supreme in his strength. How does he sport himself? How does he directly sport and make others sport? O brahmana! The illustrious Hari is indeed wonderful in his deeds. Even if wise ones try, they find it impossible to comprehend it. He assumes the qualities of Prakriti, simultaneously, or one after another. Though he is one, he assumes many different forms and acts through many different births."'

Suta answered, 'The king thus invited him [507] to speak about Hari's qualities. Remembering Hrishikesha, he stared to speak.

'Shri-Shuka said, "I again bow down before the supreme Purusha. For the sake of creation, preservation and destruction, he uses his pastimes. He assumes bodies with the three attributes. [508] Though his paths are inconceivable, he is inside all creation. I again bow to the one who removes the afflictions of virtuous ones and curbs the growth of those who are wicked. He is the embodiment of sattva. In particular, if a man is in the paramahamsa state, he is the one who delivers what is being sought. I repeatedly bow down before the bull among the Satvatas. He is far away from those who are critical and practitioners of wrong kinds of yoga. He restrains them through his great tranquility and powers. I bow down to the one who has his own abode in the brahman. Chanting about him, remembering him, glancing towards him, bowing down to him, hearing about him and worshipping him instantly cleanse the taints in the worlds. I bow down to the auspicious one who is heard about. Accomplished ones resort to his feet and with all their inner souls, give themselves up to being attached to him. Without any difficulty, they then attain the state of the brahman. I bow down to the auspicious one who is heard about. Those who are ascetics, those who are givers of alms, those who are illustrious, those who are spirited, those who know about the mantras and those who follow everything auspicious cannot obtain benefit without offering themselves to him. I bow down to the auspicious one who is heard about. Kiratas, Hunas, Andhras, Pulindas, Pulka-

shas, Abhiras, Kankas, Yavanas, Khasas and others who are wicked are purified by seeking refuge with his devotees. I bow down before Lord Vishnu. He is the supreme lord of those who know about the atman. The three [509] are in him. Dharma is in him. Austerities are in him. Those who are beyond the illusory, Aja, [510] Shankara and the others, go to him and observe his form, which is beyond dispute. May the illustrious one show me his favours. He is the lord of prosperity. He is the lord of sacrifices. He is the lord of subjects. He is the lord of wisdom. He is the lord of the worlds. He is the lord of the earth. He is the lord and refuge of Andhakas, Vrishnis and Satvatas. May the illustrious one, the lord of all those who are virtuous, show me his favours. His lotus feet are thought of in the course of meditation. The wise ones cleanse their wisdom and perceive the truth about the atman. They speak of him as they will. [511] May the illustrious Mukunda show me his favours. In ancient times, he urged and extended memory and Sarsasvati in Aja's heart and with her own signs, she seemed to be manifested from his mouth. [512] May the bull among all rishis show me his favours. In ancient times, the lord Purusha, who was lying down, created the great elements [513] and manifested himself in them for creation. He used sixteen of his parts to enjoy the sixteen qualities. [514] May the illustrious one decorate my speech. I bow down to Vasudeva and to the illustrious composer. [515] Like liquor, amiable ones drink drops of knowledge that emerged from his lotus-like mouth. O king! This is what Narada asked the one who was born first, the source of the Vedas, [516] and he was informed about this directly by Hari himself."'

Chapter 2(5)

"'Narada asked, 'O god of the gods! O one who created beings! O first one to be born! I bow down before you. Please tell me about the knowledge that instructs a person about how to know the truth about the atman. O lord! What are the forms and manifestations of this creation? How is it preserved? Also tell me the truth about what happens to it thereafter. [517] Tell

me the truth about everything. O lord! You know everything about this, the past, the present and the future. Like a myrobalan in your hand, the universe and all knowledge is vested in you. What is your knowledge? What is your support? Who controls you? What is your nature? Do you create beings alone, using your own maya for that creation? Do you create them yourself? There is no defeat in you. Like a spider producing strands without any aid, do you only use your own strength? O lord! I do not know of anyone who is superior, inferior, or equal to you. Everything permanent and transitory, with name, form and qualities, has been created by no one other than you. Controlling yourself, you performed terrible austerities, without suffering from exhaustion. Therefore, should we doubt the existence of a superior? I have asked you about all of this. O one who is omniscient! O one who is the lord of everything! Please explain the truth, so that I am instructed by someone who is learned.'

'"Brahma replied, 'O child! You are extremely compassionate and curious. O amiable one! You have urged me to show you the valour of the illustrious one. What you have told me about you not knowing a person who is superior to me is not false. However, if you only know about me, you only know that much. He illuminates the universe with his rays. It is his manifestations that I manifest. This is like the fire, the moon, the firmament, the planets and the stars reflecting the sun. I bow down to the illustrious one. We meditate on Vasudeva. I am spoken of as the preceptor of the universe. However, his maya is invincible. She [518] is ashamed of remaining in the line of vision. Therefore, evil-minded ones are confounded and said, "This is mine. This is I." Objects, deeds, time and the natural proclivities of beings are all part of Vasudeva, the supreme brahman. In truth, there is no other objective. The Vedas say that Narayana is supreme. The gods have been generated from Narayana's body. Narayana is superior to the worlds. [519] Narayana is superior to sacrifices. Narayana is superior to yoga. Narayana is superior to austerities. Narayana is superior to knowledge. Narayana is superior to all destinations. It is because of the glance of the mysterious lord, with everything in his atman, that I have been created and create this creation for the sake of further creation. I have been urged by his glance. He is

without qualities. But for the sake of creation, preservation and destruction, the lord has used his maya to assume the three qualities of sattva, rajas and tamas. Though the Purusha is always free, he is bound down in qualities and resorts to action, cause of action, the agent of action, material knowledge and rituals. O brahmana! The illustrious Adhokshaja cannot be perceived through the three attributes. [520] He follows his own path and is the lord of everything and of me. He is the lord of maya and uses his own maya, as he himself wills, for the sake of time, action and deeds. They appear thus and again go back to him. Time leads to a distortion in the qualities, as a consequence of the transformation of nature. After Purusha was manifested, Mahat was born for the sake of action. [521] Mahat was transformed by an increase in rajas and sattva. Subsequently, when nature was suffused with tamas, activities that led to knowledge of material objects came into being. This is known as ahamkara and manifested itself in three forms—*vaikarika*, [522] *taijasa* [523] and *tamasa*. O lord! These are powers of material objects, powers of acting and powers of knowledge. The tamasa transformation led to the creation of the elements, and space was generated. Like the relationship between a seer and the object seen, its [524] form and attributes are the quality of sound. When the sky was transformed, air was generated and its attribute is the quality of touch. Because of what preceded it, it also possesses the quality of sound, and the breath of life, vigour and strength result from it. When air was transformed, time, action and nature followed. Fire and its attribute resulted and there were also the attributes of touch and sound. [525] When fire was transformed, water and its attribute of taste resulted. However, the attributes of form, touch and sound were also assumed. When water was transformed, the earth [526] and its attribute of smell resulted. However, the preceding attributes of taste, form, touch and sound were also assumed. Mind and the ten vaikarika gods were born from vaikarika. These were the ones who presided over the directions, Vayu, Surya, Prachetas, the two Ashvins, and Agni, Indra, Upendra, Mitra and Ka. [527] Through a transformation in taijasa, the five senses were generated, the five that give capacity for knowledge, [528] the five that give capacity for acting, [529] intelligence, the breath of life and energy were generated, such as

the sense of hearing, the sense of smell, the sense of sight, the sense of taste, the sense of touch, the sense of speech, the genital organs, the legs and the anus. O excellent brahmana! As long as the elements, the senses, the mind and the attributes were not brought together, it was impossible for the body to be created. Urged by the strength of the illustrious one, they were assimilated with each other. Everything, both the permanent and the temporary, was created. There was an egg that was not manifest, [530] lying down in the water. At the end of one thousand years, the lord of beings made this manifest and infused time, action and nature. Purusha split the egg and emerged, with thousands of thighs, legs, arms and eyes and thousands of mouths and heads. Learned ones think of the worlds being located in his form, there are seven above the waist and there are seven that are below the hips. Brahmanas are Purusha's mouth and kshatriyas are his arms. Vaishyas are the illustrious one's thighs and shudras were born from his feet. Bhurloka [531] is thought to be his feet and *bhuvarloka* is his navel. Svarloka is his heart and maharloka is the great-souled one's chest. Janaloka is his neck and tapoloka is the area between his breasts. [532] Satyaloka is in his head. Brahmaloka is eternal. [533] O lord! Atala is in his hips and vitala is located in his thighs. The pure sutala is in his knees and talatala is in his shanks. Mahatala is in his calves and rasatala is in the upper parts of his feet. Patala is in the soles of his feet. Thus, Purusha is full of the worlds. There are some people who have thought of the worlds differently. Bhurloka has been thought to be in his feet, bhuvarloka in his navel and svarloka has been thought of as his head.'"'

Chapter 2(6)

"'Brahma said, 'His mouth, where Agni resides, is the source of speech. The seven constituents of his body give rise to the chhandas. [534] His tongue is the source of *havya*, *kavya*, amrita, food and all flavours. [535] His supreme nostrils are the source of all kinds of vital airs and Vayu. His sense of smell is the source of the two Ashvins, herbs and delightful fragrances. His eyes

are the source of form, energy and illumination. The sky and the sun are in his pupils. His ears are the directions and tirthas. His sense of hearing is the source of space and sound. His body is the source of all objects and everything that is auspicious. His skin is the source of touch, Vayu and all kinds of sacrifices. All trees and herbs result from his body hair, such as those that are used for sacrifices. His hair, beard and nails give rise to stone, iron, clouds and lightning. His arms are the guardians of the world, who are the performers of general auspicious deeds. His strides are bhurloka, bhuvarloka and svarloka, and for the sake of benefit and refuge. Hari's feet are the support for those who want all the excellent objects of desire. His penis is the source of water, semen, creation, rain and Prajapati. His genital organs are the cause of pleasure that comes through offspring. O Narada! His anus is the abode of Yama and Mitra and the place for evacuation. His rectum is said to be the source of violence, Nairitti, death and hell. His back is the source of defeat, adharma and tamas. His arteries and veins are the source of male and female rivers. His bones are the source of mountain ranges. His stomach is known as the source of the unmanifest, the juices in food, the oceans and the destruction of creatures. Purusha's heart is the source of the mind. Dharma, you, I, the Kumaras, [536] Bhava, [537] knowledge and sattva are dependent on the supreme one's atman. I, you, Bhava, the sages who are your elders, [538] the gods, asuras, men, nagas, birds, deer, reptiles, gandharvas, apsaras, *yaksha*s, *raksha*s, [539] the large number of bhutas, serpents, animals, ancestors, Siddhas, vidyadharas, charanas, trees, all the many kinds of creatures that dwell in water, on land and in the sky, planets, *nakshatra*s, comets, stars, lightning, thunder, clouds are nothing but this Purusha. He is the past, the present and the future. He pervades the universe, but is only the length of a span. The sun extends its powers to illuminate what is inside and outside it. In that way, the large Purusha illuminates everything inside and outside. He is the lord of immortality and freedom from fear and transcends mortality and action for fruits. O brahmana! Therefore, the greatness of Purusha is impossible to measure. The learned know him as Sthitipada, [540] since all creatures are established in one of his feet. Immortality, freedom from hardships and freedom from fear are his three heads, which are be-

yond what is at the top. [541] The three feet that are outside the three worlds [542] are for the ashramas that do not lead to the generation of offspring. [543] There are others who do not follow great vows and are in the householder stage. They are inside the three worlds. The one who pervades the universe is the final destination of both those who control [544] and those who do not control. Purusha is the refuge for both knowledge and ignorance. Virat consists of the elements, senses and qualities and was from the egg. However, just as the sun, which heats the universe, is distinct from its rays, he transcends the material of the egg. I was born from the lotus in the navel of the great-souled one. With the exception of the Purusha's body, I did not know of any other materials that could be used for the sacrifice. O excellent one! For a sacrifice, animals, trees, kusha grass, a sacrificial arena with the best qualities, an auspicious time, other objects, herbs, vegetable products, honey, gold, earth, water, Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, four chief priests for the sacrifice, [545] names that are invoked, [546] mantras, *dakshina*, [547] vows, a specific order for the gods, kalpa, [548] *sankalpa*, [549] *tantra*, specific movements, intelligence, atonement [550] and dedication are necessary. I collected all this material from Purusha's body. I collected an abundance of these objects from Purusha's body. Purusha is himself the sacrifice. He is the lord worshipped through the sacrifice. Your nine brothers are Prajapatis. [551] Controlling themselves, they performed the sacrifice to the manifest and unmanifest Purusha. In the course of time, the Manus, other rishis, the ancestors, the gods, daityas and humans performed sacrifices to the lord and worshipped him. Everything in the universe is located in the illustrious Narayana. He is without qualities, but uses his maya to himself assume qualities at the time of creation. I create when I am engaged by him. It is under his control that Hara [552] destroys. He preserves the universe in his form of Purusha. He is the one who wields these three powers. [553] O son! I have told you what you asked me about. The illustrious one exists in everything that one can think of. He is the permanent and the transient. O dear one! No statement of mine has ever been seen to be untrue. My mind does not follow anything that is untrue. My senses are never attracted towards a path that is not virtuous. This is because I attentively hold Hari close to my

heart. I am revered because I am full of knowledge and full of austerities. I have been worshipped as the chief of the Prajapatis. I am controlled and accomplished and resort to yoga. However, I do not know how I myself have been created. I surrender myself before his feet, which sever the cycle of life and bring benediction and all that is extremely auspicious. Like the sky, which does not know its limits, he cannot measure the limits of his powers and maya. How can others? You, or I, or Vamadeva [554] do not know his measure. How can other gods? Our intelligence is confounded by his maya. According to our capacities, we can only comprehend what has been created. We and the others chant about his avataras and deeds. But we do not know the truth about him. I bow down to the illustrious one. He is the original Purusha, without birth. From one kalpa to another kalpa, he uses his own atman to create himself within his own atman. He is the preserver and he is the destroyer. He is pure knowledge, existing properly in all of us. He is the absolute truth. He is without beginning and without end. He is without qualities. He is everlasting and without decay. O rishi! When their atmans, senses and bodies become tranquil, sages obtain him. But when one tries to reach him through untenable and distorted arguments, he vanishes. Purusha is the first avatara of the supreme one. Time, nature, qualities, cause, effect, the mind, the elements, transformations, qualities, senses, Virat, [555] Svarat, [556] everything immobile and everything that moves are forms of the great one. I, Bhava, [557] Yajna, [558] these lords of the subjects, [559] Daksha and the others, you and the others, the protectors of svarloka, the protectors of the world of the birds, the protectors of the world of men, the protectors of the nether regions, the lords of gandharvas, vidyadharas and charanas, the protectors of yakshas, rakshas, serpents and nagas, the bulls among the rishis, the ancestors, the Indras among the daityas, the lords of the Siddhas, the Indras among the danavas and all those who are lords of *preta*s, [560] pishachas, bhutas, *kushmanda*s, [561] aquatic animals and birds and everything else in the worlds that possesses greatness—is endowed with the illustrious one's energy, mental powers, sensual powers, strength, forgiveness, beauty, modesty, prosperity, intelligence and wonderful complexion, regardless of whether it is with form or without form. He is the ultimate

truth. O rishi! The supreme Purusha's *lilavataras* [562] are primarily worshipped. Drink in that account, in progressive order, so that all the impurities in the ear are dissolved. It is pleasant to hear.'"'

Chapter 2(7)

"'"Brahma said, 'In his pastimes, the infinite one assumed a form that consisted of all the sacrifices, in order to raise up the surface of the earth. [563] He was like the wielder of the vajra, shattering mountains. Inside the great ocean, he used his tusks to shatter the first daitya. [564] He was then born as Suyajna, the son of Ruchi and Akuti. Through Dakshina, [565] he had the immortals as his sons, Suyama being the foremost. Since he removed the great afflictions the three worlds suffered from, Svayambhu Manu referred to him as Hari. [566] O brahmana! Through Devahuti, he was born in Kardama's house, together with nine sisters. He told his own mother about the destination of the atman. Through those words, in that life, she was cleansed of all the taints and mud which accrue to the atman because of association with the qualities and obtained Kapila's destination. [567] Atri sought a son. Satisfied, the illustrious one said, "I will give myself to you" and was known as Datta. [568] The dust of his lotus feet purified the bodies of Haihayas, Yadus and others and they obtained yoga and prosperity, in this world and in the next. In the beginning, to create many kinds of worlds, I tormented myself through austerities. Because of those austerities, he himself assumed the form of four "Sanas". [569] In the devastation and deluge of the preceding kalpa, the truth about the atman had been destroyed. When they heard about it, those sages immediately realized the atman. Through Dharma and Murti, Daksha's daughter, the illustrious one was born as Nara and Narayana, powerful because of their own austerities. Female divinities, companions of Ananga, were unable to make them deviate from their rituals and saw their likes emerge from him. [570] Indeed, with the rage in their eyes, they burnt down Kama. Though they burnt him down in rage, they could not withstand the consequences of this rage. Such rage is incapable of entering the pure

one. [571] How can Kama enter his mind? Though he was a child, he was pierced by the words uttered by a co-wife in the king's presence. [572] Yet a child, he took to the forest and performed austerities there. Pleased by the worship, he was granted a permanent position in the sky and was praised by the sages who are above him and below him. Vena traversed the wrong path. His manly deeds and good fortune were destroyed by the words spoken by the brahmanas and he descended into hell. In order to save him and the world, he became his son and milked the earth for all kinds of wealth. [573] He was born as Rishabha, the son of Nabhi and Sudevi. He was impartial towards everyone and performed *jada yoga*. This is a state accepted by the rishis as the paramahamsa state. One is steady in one's tranquility and is liberated from all attachment. The illustrious one became Hayashira [574] at my sacrifice. Golden in complexion, he is himself the Purusha who presides over sacrifices. The chhandas are in him. Sacrifices are in him. He is the atman of all the gods. Beautiful and pleasant speech [575] appeared from his breathing. When a yuga was about to end, Manu [576] saw him in the form of Matsya. [577] He was the refuge for the earth and all the living creatures. I was terrified by that great fear and the Vedas fell down from my mouth into the water. He collected and restored the path of the Vedas and sported himself. The leaders of the immortals and the danavas churned the ocean of milk, desiring amrita. Assuming the form of a tortoise, he supported Mandara on his back. The pressing down of the mountain was like the scratching of an itch. Therefore, he went to sleep for a while. To dispel the great fear faced by the residents of heaven, he assumed the form of Nrisimha. [578] He rolled his eyebrows in rage and his tusks and visage were fierce. The Indra among the daityas quickly descended on him, wielding a club. However, he placed him on his lap and tore apart the writhing one with his nails. In a body of water, the leader of a herd [579] was seized by the leg by a crocodile that was superior in strength. Afflicted, it held a lotus in its tusk and said, "O original Purusha! O protector of all the worlds! The hearing of your name is auspicious. The hearing of your name is like a tirtha." The immeasurable Hari heard the cry for help. With the chakra weapon in his hand, he mounted the king of the birds. [580] He severed the crocodile's mouth with his chakra. The

compassionate and illustrious one dragged the elephant out by seizing its trunk. Superior in qualities, he surpassed all of Aditi's sons, who were older to him. [581] The supreme one traversed the worlds. As a dwarf, he pretended to ask for land that could be covered in three of his strides. [582] Even if a person treads along a false path, an owner's property should not be taken away, except through asking. Bali did not desire anything, nor lordship over the gods. He purified his head with the water used to wash Urukrama's feet and was firm in his vows. He did not wish to do anything other than what had been promised. O dear one! He dedicated his mind to Hari. O Narada! The illustrious one was satisfied with your great and increasing love towards him and your virtues. He spoke to you about yoga, knowledge and the Bhagavata, which is like a lamp for learning the truth about the atman. Those who seek refuge with Vasudeva can understand this easily. In different manvantaras, he presides as a descendant of the Manu lineage, using his own undeterred strength and chakra in the ten directions. He controls the wicked kings and extends his own deeds. The fame of his delightful character ascends to Satyaloka, above the three worlds. Through his own deeds, the illustrious one assumed the form of Dhanvantari. By uttering his name, the diseases of ailing men are swiftly destroyed. By obtaining his share of amrita in sacrifices, he grants long lifespans. Having descended into this world, he instructed about *ayurveda*. [583] The destruction of the kshatriyas was ordained by destiny. They desired to suffer the afflictions of hell, gave up the true path and hated brahmanas. The great-souled one was fierce in his valour and desired to uproot the thorns of the worlds. He used his axe, sharp at the edges, twenty-one times. [584] The lord of portions is favourably inclined towards us and descended in the Ikshvaku lineage, along with his different portions. Following his senior's [585] instruction, he entered the forest with his beloved and younger brother. The one with the ten shoulders [586] obstructed him and was made to suffer. The limbs of the great ocean trembled with fear and it granted a passage. Like Hara, he glanced at the city of the enemy and wished to burn it down in rage. He was enraged and afflicted because his well-wisher [587] was far away. His blazing sight scorched the world of *makara*s, [588] serpents and crocodiles. The tusks of the great Indra's mount

crashed against his chest and were broken. Stuck there, in the chest of the one who was boastfully laughing, the tusks illuminated the direction. [589] He wished to instantly take away the life of the one who had abducted his wife. He twanged his bow and moved around between the two armies. The earth will suffer from the armies of those who are inferior to the gods and to remove this affliction, he will be born in his portions, from black hair and white hair. [590] His ways will be incomprehensible to people and he will perform deeds reflective of his own greatness. Though a child, he will take away the life of the one who assumed the form of a demoness. [591] When three months old, he will overturn the cart with a kick of his foot. He will crawl between two *arjuna* trees whose tops touch the sky and uproot them. These are things that are impossible to think of. In Vraja, the animals of Vraja and their herdsmen will drink water mixed with poison. By showering down compassionate looks on them, he will bring them back to life. He will playfully jump into the water and chastise a serpent [592] whose tongues will flicker because of its virulent poison. On the day of that divine deed, when everyone will be asleep in the night, a conflagration will burn down the dry forest and the residents of Vraja will think that their end has come. However, he and Bala, [593] invincible in their valour, will deliver them by asking them to close their eyes. His mother will seize whatever ropes and other binding material that she can find. However, it will be insufficient to tie down her son. When he yawns, the cowherd lady [594] will see all the worlds inside his mouth and be scared. But realization will dawn on her. [595] He will free Nanda from the fear caused by Varuna's noose and the cowherds imprisoned in a cave by Maya's son. [596] When everyone will be asleep in the night because of the extreme exhaustion from the work during the day, he will take the entire Gokula to the world of Vaikuntha. When the cowherds do not perform the sacrifice, the god [597] will shower down and flood Vraja, raining down for seven days. But though only seven years old, he will take compassion on the animals and protect them, playfully holding up the mountain [598] against the showers, like a mushroom. In the night, he will sport in the forest, awash with the white beams of the moon. He will be eager to start the dance of rasa, accompanied by songs with long and melodi-

ous music that will ignite sexual desire among the wives of the residents of Vraja. At that time, he will sever the head of Dhanada's follower, the abductor. [599] There will be other wicked ones—Pralamba, Khara, [600] Dardura, Keshi, Arishta, wrestlers, [601] the elephant, [602] Kamsa, Yavana, [603] the ape, [604] Poundraka and the others, Shalva, Kuja, [605] Balvala, Dantavakra, Saptoksha, Shambara, Viduratha, Rukmi and the others, powerful commanders who wielded bows in battle, Kamboja, Matsya, Kuru, Srinjaya, Kekaya and the others. They will be destroyed through the apparent names of Bala, Partha and Bhima. In reality, they will be conveyed by Hari to an unblemished residence in his abode. In the course of time, men will be limited in intelligence, with short spans of life. They will find it difficult and impossible to digest the sacred texts he himself composed. Therefore, he will appear as Satyavati's son [606] and divide the tree of the Vedas into different branches, appropriate for the age. The haters of the gods will faithfully follow the path indicated by the sacred texts. They will travel between cities in invisible vehicles constructed by Maya, destroying the worlds. He will confound their intelligence, with a desire to tempt them. He will don many kinds of attire and speak to them about what is not dharma. [607] At the end of the yuga, the illustrious one will chastise Kali. At that time, Hari's exploits will not be discussed, not even in the houses of virtuous ones. Dvija people [608] will be heretics and vrishalas will be kings among men. *Svaha, svadha* and *vashatkara* will not be heard anywhere. Through his maya, the lord who is supreme in strength has assumed different forms—austerities, I, the rishis and the nine Prajapatis at the time of creation; dharma, sacrifices, Manus, immortals and kings at the time of preservation; and adharma, Hara and asuras filled with intolerance at the time of destruction. Who in this world can enumerate Vishnu's valour, not even a wise person who has counted the particles of dust on earth? Unwavering, with one leg he transcended the three worlds and made the above, where there is equilibrium between the three qualities, tremble. [609] I, and all the sages who are your elder brothers, know about the complete maya and strength of Purusha, not to speak of those who are inferior to us. Shesha, the first god, has been singing about his qualities with one thousand mouths, but has still been unable to reach

the end. There are those on whom the illustrious and infinite one confers his compassion. Without any falsehood, they resort to his feet with all their souls. They are the ones who comprehend the ultimate forms of the god's maya, which are so very difficult to reach. They do not have any sense of 'I' and 'mine', not even for that which is devoured by dogs and jackals. [610] O dear one! I know about the supreme one's *yoga maya*. So do you, [611] Bhava, the illustrious and noble daitya, [612] Manu and his wife, [613] Manu's sons and daughters, Prachinabarhi, Ribhu, Anga, Dhruva, Ikshvaku, Aila, [614] Muchukunda, Videha, [615] Gadhi, Raghu, Ambarisha, Sagara, Gaya, Nahusha's son [616] and the others, Mandhatri, Alarka, Shatadhanva, Anu, Rantideva, Devavrata, [617] Bali, Amurtaraya, Dilipa, Shoubhari, Utanka, Shibi, Devala, Pippalada, Sarasvata, Uddhava, Parashara, Bhurishena, others like Vibhishana, Hanumat, the one given by Upendra, [618] Partha, Arshtishena, Vidura, Shrutadeva and other noble ones. They know and cross over the god's maya. Women, shudras, Hunas, Shabaras and others who are wicked in their livelihood have become good in conduct, once they have been instructed and are devoted to the one with wonderful strides. So have those born as inferior species, not to speak of those who have sustained their learning. He is eternal and tranquil. He represents freedom from fear. He is pure and impartial and is both existent and non-existent. This is the truth about the paramatman. He is beyond the reach of speech and beyond action and rites performed for fruits. In his presence, all other kinds of maya are ashamed and return. This is the supreme state of the illustrious Purusha. He is the brahman, known as infinite bliss, without any sorrow. Ascetics who meditate on him have no need for yama or niyama, just as Indra does not need a spade to dig a well. They surrender themselves and give up all sense of self. The illustrious one bestows all that is auspicious. Sentiments, nature and the rules for virtuous behaviour, which lead to success, flow from him. When the elements that make up the body are destroyed, the body is also destroyed. But like the sky, the being inside [619] is not destroyed and is not born again. O son! I have briefly explained to you the nature of the illustrious one, the creator of the universe. All that is cause and effect is no different from Hari. This is named Bhagavata and was told to me by the

illustrious one. It is a collection of his powers. Make this more extensive, [620] so that there is devotion among men towards the illustrious Hari. With all your soul, decide to describe this entire store. If a person describes the lord's maya, approves of the lord, or if a person always listens to it faithfully, his atman is never confounded by the maya.'"'

Chapter 2(8)

'The king said, "O brahmana! Narada possessed insight about the divinity and Brahma instructed him to recount the qualities of the one who is without qualities. What did he say and to whom? O supreme among those who know about the truth! I wish to know the truth about this, the account of Hari's extraordinary valour, extremely auspicious for people. O immensely fortunate one! Speak to me so that with my entire atman, I can immerse myself in Krishna, detached, so that my mind can discard my body. If a person always listens to it faithfully and on his own, chants about it, within a short period of time, the illustrious one enters his heart. Depending on one's level and sentiments, Krishna enters the lotus [621] through the ears and washes away all taints, like the autumn does to water. [622] When a man's atman is cleansed, he does not let go of Krishna's feet. He is freed from all hardships, like a traveller in his own residence. [623] O brahmana! The body begins without elements, but is then constituted through elements. Is there a cause behind this, or does it happen on its own? [624] You know about this. Tell me. The lotus, which has in it the states and signs of all the worlds, sprouted from his belly. The size and form of Purusha's body is said to be the same as this one. [625] What is the difference between the state and form of the two? Through the favours of the one who is inside the atmans of all creatures, Aja [626] creates beings and it was through his favours that the one who was born from the lotus in the navel could see his form. Purusha is the creator, preserver and destroyer of the universe. The lord of maya is free of his own maya. He lies down, inside every heart. We have earlier heard that all the worlds and their guardians were created from Purusha's body. The

worlds and their guardians are also inside his body. [627] What is the duration of a kalpa and a *vikalpa*? [628] How is time measured? What do the words past, present and future mean? What are the lifespans of beings? O supreme among brahmanas! What is the nature of the progress of time? Though long, it seems to be short. What kind of destinations does karma lead to? What are the consequences of the accumulation of different kinds of karma? What qualities lead to one with qualities [629] and what lead to undesired consequences? How did the creation of the earth, patala, the directions, the sky, planets, nakshatras, mountains, rivers, oceans, continents and their inhabitants occur? What was the size of the cosmic egg, measured separately from the inside and the outside? What is the conduct of great entities? What is the determination of varnas and ashramas? What are yugas and what is the duration of a yuga? What is the nature of dharma in one yuga and in another yuga? What are Hari's wonderful descents and conduct? What is the general dharma for humans? Is there anything that is specific? What is the dharma for *shrenis* [630] and royal sages? What should be done when there are difficulties in remaining alive? [631] What is the number of *tattvas*? [632] What are their signs and the causes that lead to the signs? What are the methods for worshipping Purusha? What is *adhyatmika* [633] *yoga*? What are the powers and movements of lords of yoga? How is the *linga* of a yogi detached? [634] What are the texts of Vedas, *Upavedas*, dharma, Itihasa and Puranas? [635] How are all beings created, destroyed and submerged in the deluge? If one desires the three objectives, [636] what are the ordinances for performing sacrifices and other auspicious things? How do created beings repent and how are they born as heretics? How is the atman liberated from its bondage? How does it attain its true nature? The illustrious and self-dependent one sports with his own maya. At the time of destruction, how does the lord separate himself from his maya and remain as a witness? O illustrious one! In progressive order, I have asked you about all of this. O great sage! I have sought refuge with you. You should let me know the truth about all this. You know the facts about all this, just as Brahma, the self-creating one, does. The others only follow what their ancestors, and the ancestors of those ancestors, did. O brahmana! Because of fasting, the breath of my life

has not become exhausted. I will drink nectar in the form of Achyuta, when it flows from the ocean of your speech."'

Suta said, 'In the assembly, invited by King Vishnurata to speak about the lord of the virtuous, Brahmarata [637] was extremely delighted. He told them about Bhagavata Purana, revered by Brahma. [638] When Brahma-kalpa started, [639] the illustrious one had spoken about this to Brahma. Whatever Parikshit, bull among the Pandus, had asked about, in due order, he started to recount all of this.'

Chapter 2(9)

'Shri-Shuka said, "O king! Without the favour of his own maya, one cannot comprehend the supreme nature of the atman, its meaning and its association. [640] This is exactly like seeing something in a dream. Many forms are seen. It is maya that gives rise to these many forms. While taking pleasure in these qualities, the person thinks, 'This is I. This is mine.' However, if one transcends time and maya, one certainly sees one's own greatness in the supreme one. Freed from confusion and having discarded both of these, [641] one finds delight. Worshipped through vows that were not deceitful, he showed his form to Brahma. For the purpose of conveying the pure truth about the atman, the illustrious one spoke about his true self. He [642] is the original god, the supreme preceptor of the universe. Located in the lotus, he looked around, desiring to create. However, he could not understand the proper directions whereby he should go about this. What would be the right way of creating diverse material objects? While thinking about this, the lord once heard two aksharas [643] spoken from inside the water. These were the sixteenth and twenty-first syllables and they combined. [644] O king! For those who possess nothing, this is said to represent their wealth. Hearing this, he looked around in all the directions in search of the speaker. Though he looked, he did not see anyone. He seated himself on the lotus and made up his mind that he should turn to austerities, as instructed. He was infallible in his insight. He was in control of his breath of life and his atman. He

had conquered both types of senses. [645] For one thousand years, he tormented himself through austerities, so that all the worlds might be illuminated. He controlled himself and engaged in these austerities, which is why he is the greatest of ascetics. The illustrious one was pleased through this worship. He showed him his own supreme world [646] and there is nothing superior to this. All the different kinds of affliction do not exist there, nor do confusion and fear. It is a place that is praised by those who have realized their own selves. There is no rajas or tamas there and these do not get mixed up with sattva. Time has no power there. There is no maya there, not to speak of other things. There, those who follow Hari are worshipped by gods and asuras. Their [647] radiance is dark blue. Their eyes are like lotuses with one hundred petals. Their garments are yellow. They are extremely handsome and their bodies are extremely well formed. All of them possess four arms, decorated with shining jewels. The excellent golden ornaments are extremely radiant. They are as radiant as coral, lapis lazuli and lotuses. The earrings seem to bloom and they wear diadems and garlands. On every side of that shining world, there are brilliant arrays of *vimana*s [648] that belong to the great-souled ones. The complexion of the excellent women is like lightning. The place looks like the sky, covered by arrays of clouds tinged with lightning. In embodied form, Shri tends to the lord's feet. In many different kinds of splendour, she honours him. She sings about her beloved's deeds. In turn, bees, which follow spring, sing words of praise about Shri. He saw the lord of all the Satvatas there, Shri's lord, the lord of sacrifices and the lord of the universe. Sunanda, Nanda, Prabala, Arhana and others were the foremost among his attendants and they served the lord. He showed his favours by glancing towards his servants and that glance was intoxicating. His face beamed with a pleasant smile and his eyes were red. He wore a diadem and earrings and possessed four arms. His garments were yellow and the mark of shrivatsa could be discerned on his chest. [649] He was worshipped astride a supreme throne and was surrounded by the four, sixteen and five powers. [650] His personal powers are with him and so are minor and temporary powers. [651] The lord found delight in his own abode. On seeing the creator of the universe, his [652] heart overflowed with delight. His body

hair stood up in joy and there were tears of affection in his eyes. He bowed down before his lotus feet, which can only be attained by paramahamsas who have followed the path. He [653] was delighted to see the wise present himself before him. He deserved to be instructed in the matter of creating beings. Delighted and happy, he touched the beloved one with his hand and addressed him in gentle words that were full of illumination.

‘“The illustrious one said, ‘O one in whom all the Vedas exist! I am satisfied with you. In order to create, you have performed austerities for a very long time. Deceitful yogis find it very difficult to please me. O fortunate one! You are the lord of boons. But ask for a desired boon from me. O Brahma! The ultimate purpose of human exertion is an ability to see me. The greatest comprehension of learned ones is an ability to see my abode. You heard me and performed supreme austerities for that reason. You were confused about what you should do and it is I who instructed you then. O unblemished one! Austerities [654] are in my heart. I am tapas itself. Know that I create through austerities. I devour it again, using austerities. I maintain the universe through austerities. My valour is in austerities that are extremely difficult to perform.’

‘“Brahma replied, ‘O illustrious one! You are the lord of all the creatures. You are in every heart. Through your unobstructed wisdom, you are aware of what is being desired. O protector! Nevertheless, I am seeking refuge with you as a protector. You are the protector of all protectors. Let your gross and subtle forms be known to me, though you are one who has no form. Through the maya of your own yoga, many kinds of powers combine in you. You yourself do this in your atman, for creation, preservation and destruction. O one whose determination is infallible! In your pastimes, you are like a spider that weaves a web around itself. O Madhava! Therefore, please develop an intelligence in me so that I can understand this. O illustrious one! I will attentively do whatever you desire. However, grant me your favours. Even though I act to create beings, let me not be bound down by that. O lord! You have touched me, just as a friend does to a friend. In the matter of creating beings, I will divide them into different groups. I will be

steadfast in this act and will not waver. However, let no insolence creep into me, so that I pride myself as one without birth.'

'"The illustrious one said, 'The knowledge about me is extremely secret and is full of self-realization. I will explain this to you, with its various mysteries and different limbs. Accept it. Through my favours, the true knowledge will be awakened in you about who I am, my nature, my form, my qualities and my deeds. In the beginning, before everything, [655] I existed. There was nothing supreme and no cause or effect. All this came after me. All that remains [656] is also me. If something doesn't exist in the atman, it has no value, even if it exists. Like a reflection in the dark, know that this is the result of my own maya. The gross elements have entered into beings, great and small. They enter, yet do not enter. Like that, I am inside them, yet I am outside them. [657] If a person is asking about the true nature of the atman, he must certainly ask this much. Always and everywhere, he must ask about this, directly and indirectly. Engage yourself in supreme meditation and fix yourself in this doctrine. You will never be confused then, in kalpas and vikalpas.'"

'Shri-Shuka said, "The one who has no birth thus instructed the supreme among all those who are born. Having shown him his own form, Hari vanished. Hari, the object of all the senses, vanished. Joining his hands in salutation, he created the universe and all the beings in it, just as it had been earlier. [658] He is the lord of those who follow the dharma of Prajapatis and of niyama and yama. Once, the fortunate one seated himself. In his own interest, he desired the welfare of created beings. Narada was his beloved son, dear among those who would inherit. He followed and served him and was good in conduct, humble and self-controlled. The great sage wanted to know about Vishnu's maya, the one who was the lord of maya. O king! He was a great devotee and satisfied his father. Having seen and satisfied his father, who was the great grandfather of the worlds, the devarshi asked him, just as you have asked me. Thus resulted Bhagavata Purana, with its ten signs. The illustrious one, the creator of beings, was pleased with his son and spoke to him. O king! On the banks of the Sarasvati, Narada told the sage, the immensely energetic Vyasa, about this, while he was meditating

on the supreme brahman. I will tell you what you have asked, about how everything that exists was generated from the original Virat Purusha. I will also explain to you all the other questions that you have asked."'

Chapter 2(10)

'Shri-Shuka said, "Here, there exists the account of (1) gross creation; (2) subtle creation; (3) preservation; (4) sustenance; (5) the addiction to the senses; (6) manvantaras; (7) accounts of the lord; (8) withdrawal; (9) liberation; and (10) the ultimate refuge. [659] For ascertaining the pure meaning of the tenth, the great-souled ones describe the nature of the first nine through direct explanation, or through brief references to the sacred texts. The interaction of the elements, the senses, the objects of the senses and the mind is said to be subtle creation. Brahma's creation, through a disequilibrium in the qualities, is said to be Pourusha or gross creation. Preservation represents the triumph of the one in Vaikuntha, while sustenance results from his favours. Manvantaras provide for virtuous dharma, while addiction to the senses represents the desire to undertake action. Accounts of the lord are said to be descriptions of his avataras, conduct and detailed narrations of those who follow Hari. Withdrawal is his act of lying down, together with his powers. Liberation results when he gives up all other forms and resorts to his own form. [660] The refuge of the supreme brahman is spoken of as the paramatman. This is the source from which creation and destruction manifest themselves. The Adhyatatmika Purusha perceives himself in the form of the senses. [661] In Adhidaivika form, he is in control of the senses. The Purusha who is different from either of these two is Adhibhoutika. None of these can be perceived in the absence of the others. However, if an atman knows all three, he finds his refuge within himself. The pure one desired to create pure water, so that he could lie down on it. [662] Purusha [663] emerged from the egg and stood apart. He resided in the waters created by himself for one thousand years. Since the water was created from Purusha, it is known as Naara. [664] Thus, his name is Narayana. Matter, action, time, indi-

vidual nature and the individual being result through his favours. Faced with his neglect, nothing exists. He was alone, lying down in that state of yoga. He arose and desired many different forms. Through his maya, the god created three different types of golden semen. Hear about how Purusha, the lord, divided the single flow of semen into three parts—*adhidaiva*, adhyatma and *adhibhuta*. As he exerted himself, from the space that was inside Purusha's body, the energy of the sense, strength, the breath of life and the great force were generated. When that breath of life moves, there is movement in the breaths of life in all living beings. When it doesn't move, neither do they. It is like followers following a king. Agitated by that breath of life, hunger and thirst were generated in the lord. When he desired to eat and drink, the mouth manifested itself. [665] From the mouth, the palate emerged as a separate entity. The tongue was also generated. Many kinds of taste were generated so that the tongue could savour them. When the lord desired to speak, Agni and the organ of speech, and speech, controlled by both of these, were generated from the mouth. However, since he had been in the water for a long period of time, these functions were restrained. When the two nostrils were created, respiration started to rapidly flow. When he desired to smell through the nose, fragrances and Vayu, which conveys smells, were created. There was no light and he desired to see himself. The eyes, light, the organ of seeing and the power of vision were created. He desired to understand what the rishis were saying about him. Therefore, the ears, the directions, the organ of hearing and the power of hearing were created. When he desired to feel objects, softness, hardness, lightness, heaviness, warmth, cold and the sense of touch [666] were created. On this, body hair and trees were generated. Inside and outside, the skin is surrounded by air that possesses the quality of touch. When he desired to undertake different kinds of action, the hands were generated. Their strength and Indra were created and the power to receive depends on both of them. When he desired to move purposefully, the feet were created. Vishnu himself uses the feet of men to perform actions like sacrifices and the collection of havya. When he desired offspring, joy and immortality, [667] the genital organs were created. The genital organs came into being and the beloved act of sexual

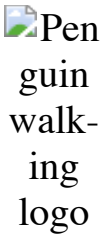
desire depends on both of them. [668] When he desired to discharge impurities left from food, the anus was created and so was Mitra. [669] The act of evacuation depends on both of them. When he desired to move from one body to another body, the aperture of the navel, the breath of life, apana, and Mrityu were created. Separation depends on these two. [670] When he desired to eat and drink, the stomach, the intestines and the veins appeared, along with the rivers and oceans. [671] Satisfaction and sustenance depends on them. When he desired to know about the maya of his atman, the heart, the mind, the moon, [672] resolution and desire were created. The seven ingredients of the body are the inner skin, the outer skin, flesh, blood, fat, marrow and bones. These were respectively created from earth, water, fire, prana, space, water and air. The qualities of the senses flow from the qualities of the elements. The mind is subject to all kinds of transformations and the intelligence is characterized by knowledge. I have described to you the gross body of the illustrious one. On the outside, it is covered by eight sheaths, the earth being the first. [673] Beyond this is the subtle body, unmanifest and without attributes. It is without beginning, middle and end. It is eternal and cannot be reached through words or thoughts. I have described to you two forms of the illustrious one. However, since they are created by maya, the learned do not accept either of these. The illustrious one is both words and the object described through words. He assumes the form of Brahma and names, forms and action. He is the doer and the non-doer, but he is also beyond both of these. O king! He is the Prajapatis, Manus, gods, rishis, the large number of ancestors, Siddhas, charanas, gandharvas, vidyadharas, asuras, guhyakas, *kinnara*s, apsaras, serpents, snakes, *kimpurusha*s, men, *matrika*s, rakshas, pishachas, pretas, bhutas, *vinayaka*s, kushmandas, *unmada*s, *vetala*s, *yatudhana*s, [674] planets, birds, deer, animals, trees, mountains and reptiles. Some are divided into two categories. [675] Others are divided into four categories. [676] Others are classified according to habitat—water, land and air. All of them obtain these ends as an outcome of their deeds—good, bad and mixed. Depending on the three attributes of sattva, rajas or tamas, they become gods, humans, or residents of hell. O king! Depending on whether each of these is dominated by the other two, each is further subdi-

vided into three and the consequent nature imbibed. [677] The illustrious one is the creator of the universe. He assumes the form of Dharma. He protects and sustains the universe, through his forms as inferior species, humans and gods. All this is created by him. He assumes the form of Rudra and the fire of destruction. Like a wind driving away dense clouds, at that time, he destroys everything. In the context of creation, [678] the illustrious one's supreme qualities are spoken about in this way. However, those who are wise should think about his attributes in a superior way. The supreme one is not described in terms of creation and other deeds. Imposition of action and counteraction on him is due to maya. Brahma's kalpa and vikalpa have been described. In this kalpa, [679] subtle creations are known as Prakritas and gross ones are known as Vaikritas. This is true of all kalpas. I will subsequently explain to you about the measurement of time, the duration of a kalpa and its divisions. For the moment, hear about Padma Kalpa."'

Shounaka asked, 'O Suta! You said that Kshatta, [680] the supreme devotee of the illustrious one, travelled to all the tirthas on earth, having left his relatives, who are so very difficult to let go off. Where did the conversation between Kshatta and Kousharava [681] about adhyatma take place? What did the illustrious one ask him about? O amiable one! Tell us about it and about what Vidura did. Why did he leave his relatives? When did he return?'

Suta replied, 'King Parikshit asked questions of the great sage. I will tell you about the replies to the king's questions. Listen.'

This ends the Second Skandha.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Third Skandha

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Chapter 3(10): 28 shlokas
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Chapter 3(1)

'Shri-Shuka said, "Kshatta gave up his own home and prosperity and entered the forest. In earlier times, he asked the illustrious Maitreya these questions. [682] This residence was one where the illustrious lord of everything [683] had himself entered, after being dishonoured in the palace of the Indra among the Pouravas."'

The king asked, 'Where did Kshatta and the illustrious Maitreya meet? What did they converse about? O lord! Tell us this. Vidura's atman was cleansed and this couldn't have been about a trifling matter. It must have been a supreme question, praised by virtuous ones.'

Suta replied, 'The noble rishi [684] was thus asked by King Parikshit. Extremely delighted in his soul, he answered, "Listen."

'Shri-Shuka said, "The king's sons were wicked. However, because his foresight had been destroyed, he supported them in adharma. His younger brother's sons had no guardian. When they entered the house of lac, it was set on fire. She was the queen of the lord among the Kurus. [685] His son performed the contemptible deed of dragging her to the assembly hall by her hair. Despite her being his daughter-in-law, the king did not restrain him. Her own tears washed away the *kunkuma* on her breasts. Through adharma, the virtuous one was defeated in gambling with the dice. He stuck to truth and went to the forest. Ajatashatru returned and asked for what had been pledged to him. However, overwhelmed by confusion, he [686] did not grant it to him. Requested by the Parthas, Krishna, the preceptor of the universe,

went to the assembly hall. Some men present thought that his words were like amrita. However, the king, [687] with his store of good merits exhausted, did not think that this was the case. He, [688] best among advisers, was invited by his elder brother, who consulted him. Vidura went to his house and the advice he offered is known as Vaidurika. [689] 'You must give Ajatashatru's share to him. [690] You have caused terrible hardships to him and he has been patient. You are terrified of Vrikodara, who is hissing like a serpent, along with his younger brothers, because of this. The illustrious god, Mukunda, has accepted the Parthas and so have the gods and the gods on earth. [691] The god of all the lords of the Yadus [692] has vanquished all the kings of men and is now in his own city. You have lost all prosperity because you have turned yourself away from Krishna. You are nurturing him [693] because you take him to be your son. He is evil personified and has entered your house. He hates Purusha. For the sake of the lineage, you should swiftly cast him away.' Kshatta, whose conduct was praised by the virtuous, spoke in this way. However, because of his increasing rage, Suyodhana's lips quivered. With Karna, his younger brother [694] and Soubala, [695] he showed him disrespect. 'Who has invited this deceitful person here? [696] This suta is a servant who has been nourished by our offerings. Yet, he acts against us and serves the cause of the enemy. Let him remain alive, but swiftly banish him from the city.' In his brother's presence, he was pierced in his inner organs and suffered severely from arrows that entered through the ears. [697] But he was not distressed or agitated, because he understood that all this was because of maya. He placed his own bow near the door and left. The Kouravas had obtained him because of their good deeds, but he departed. Having left Gajasahvya, he visited, one after another, places that were tirthas, on foot. To accumulate merit, he wished to visit spots where the one with one thousand forms had manifested himself. He travelled to cities, sacred groves, forests, mountains, bowers and the clear water of rivers and lakes. These were decorated with signs of the infinite one. He was unaccompanied by anyone else and travelled to all these tirthas. Alone, he wandered around the earth, pure in conduct. He bathed and lay down on the ground, like an avadhuta. He was alone and unnoticed and in the attire of an avadhuta. He observed vows

to satisfy Hari. He thus roamed around Bharatavarsha. In the course of time, he went to Prabhasa. At that time, through the favours of the unvanquished one, [698] Partha [699] ruled the entire earth as an emperor, under one single umbrella. [700] There, he heard about the destruction of his well-wishers, [701] who were burnt down in the forest, just as the fire consumes a grove of bamboo, when one bamboo rubs against another. [702] He thought about their being burnt down and silently went to the Sarasvati, which flows in a western direction. He went to tirthas sacred to Trita, Ushanas, Manu, Prithu, Agni, Asita, Vayu, Sudasa, Go, [703] Guha and Shraddhadeva. There, he also went to many other temples that were constructed by the best among brahmanas and gods and dedicated to the many forms of Vishnu, marked by his many signs. Having seen them, one remembers Krishna. From there, he passed through prosperous tracts like Surashtra, Souvira, Matsya and Kurujangala. In the course of time, he reached the Yamuna and saw Uddhava, who was devoted to the lord, there.

'"With deep affection, he embraced the fortunate and tranquil one, who followed Vasudeva and earlier, had been like Brihaspati's son. [704] He asked him about his own relatives, who were the subjects of the illustrious one. 'Are those two ancient Purushas, [705] who descended because they were requested by the one who was born from his navel, [706] well in Shura's [707] house? Have they achieved their objective of ensuring the welfare of the world? O dear one! Is the beloved brother-in-law of the Kurus, Shouri, [708] happy? Like a father, he gives generously to his own sisters. He is supreme among those who are generous and causes satisfaction through his gifts. O dear one! Is the brave Pradyumna, the commander of the armies of the Yadus, happy? In an earlier life, he had been the god of life and through the illustrious one, Rukmini obtained him as a son, after worshipping brahmanas. Is the lord [709] of the Satvatas, Vrishnis, Bhojas and Dasharhas happy? He had given up hopes of being a king and had gone far away, but the lotus-eyed one [710] instated him again. O amiable one! The virtuous Samba is foremost among charioteers. He is Hari's son and is just like him. In earlier life, he used to be Guha, [711] born in Ambika's womb. Because Jambavati was firm in her vows, he has been born as her son. Is he well? Is Yuyudhana

[712] well? He learnt the secrets of wielding the bow from Phalguna. By serving Adhokshaja, he swiftly attained an end that is extremely difficult for even mendicants to achieve. Is Shvaphalka's learned and faultless son, [713] who has sought refuge with the illustrious one, well? Filled with love, he lost his mental equilibrium and rolled around on the dust in the road, marked by Krishna's footprints. Is the daughter of Devaka, the Bhoja, well? [714] She gave birth to Vishnu and is like the mother of the gods. She bore the god in her womb, just as the three [715] contain the meanings that expand into sacrifices. Is the illustrious Aniruddha happy? He yields all the objects of desire for the Satvatas and has been thought of as the source of sound. [716] He rules the mind and is the fourth principle presiding over sattva. [717] O amiable one! Are Hridika, Satya's [718] son, Charudeshna, Gada and the others well? They surround and follow him, [719] like the divinity who rules their atmans. Are they wandering around in peace? Is Dharma [720] using his own two arms and the two arms of Vijaya [721] and Achyuta to maintain the ordinances of dharma? Witnessing the prosperity of his kingdom, obtained through Vijaya's service, Duryodhana was tormented in his assembly hall. How is Bhima? For a long time, he has sighed like a snake, intolerant and angry at those who had caused them injuries. In the field of battle, the earth could not tolerate the stride of his steps, when he roamed around with his club, executing wonderful modes of action. How is the famous one, the leader of arrays of chariots? He is the one who destroyed the enemy with his Gandiva bow. Once, when Girisha used his maya and arrived undetected, in the form of a hunter, he covered him with his deep and mysterious arrows. The twins were brought up as Pritha's sons and were surrounded and protected by the eyes of the Parthas. After seizing their share from the enemy in the battle, they found delight, like Suparna from the mouth of the wielder of the vajra. [722] How wonderful! Pritha remained alive for the sake of her fatherless sons, though she was deprived of the noble royal sage. [723] He was a great and brave charioteer and alone, without using a second bow, conquered the four directions. O amiable one! I sorrow over the one who descended into darkness and acted against his brother, [724] after he left for the hereafter. Because he followed his sons, though I was a well-wisher, he

drove me out of his city. Despite the scorn, I could see that Hari ordains the actions of men in this mortal world. Through his favours, undetected, I followed in his footsteps. Seeing all this, I wandered around, without any wonder. Indeed, if men seek refuge with him and desire to be freed of their afflictions, the lord frees them from the three kinds of wrong paths. [725] The Kurus repeatedly made the earth tremble with their armies, committing crimes. However, the illustrious one ignored them. He is the one without birth. He has been born to destroy those who tread along wrong paths. Though he has no acts to perform, he takes up acts for the sake of men. He is supreme and beyond the qualities and beyond the course of action. Why else does he resort to yoga and assume a body? Therefore, all the guardians of the world seek refuge with him. Though without birth, he has been born in the lineage of the Yadus for the sake of those who subject themselves to his control. His deeds are chanted about at tirthas. O friend! Recount his conduct to me.'"'

Chapter 3(2)

'Shri-Shuka said, "The devotee of the illustrious one was thus asked about the news and welfare of the beloved one by Kshatta. However, he [726] remembered the lord and was filled with anxiety. He was not interested in replying. When he was a mere child of five and was invited by his mother to have breakfast, because he was serving him in his childhood pastimes, he was not interested in having it. [727] In the course of time, he continued to serve him until he became old. When he was asked and tried to reply, he remembered his master's feet. He remained silent for a muhurta, extremely content at the nectar from Krishna's lotus feet. The virtuous one withdrew and immersed himself in a deep act of bhakti yoga. Every limb in his body was in rapture. His eyes were closed and he wiped away the tears of grief. The signs were evident that he was completely submerged in his great love [728] and that his objective had been completely achieved. Gradually, he again

returned from the world of the illustrious one to the world of men. He wiped his eyes. Smiling, Uddhava spoke affectionately to Vidura.

‘“Uddhava replied, ‘How can I speak about our welfare? Our houses have lost their prosperity. Krishna was like the sun and it has set. We have been swallowed by a boa constrictor. [729] This is indeed a great misfortune for this world, and especially for the Yadus. Like fish with the moon, [730] they dwelt with Hari and did not recognize him. The Satvatas possessed the wisdom of experience and could identify signs. However, they did not know him as the one who pervades all living beings, but only as a bull among the Satvatas. The wisdom of those who have surrendered their atmans to Hari’s atman is not confused by those who resort to wickedness and are touched by the god’s maya. He showed himself to men who had not performed austerities, thus possessing imperfect insight. He has now vanished, withdrawing his form from the sight of the world. He used his own yoga for pastimes in the mortal world. He assumed that form to exhibit the strength of his maya. The prosperity and opulence of his form is a reason for surprise. It is a supreme state, the best ornament among all the ornaments on the limbs. At the royal sacrifice performed by Dharma’s son, [731] all the three worlds could see that beautiful form and thought that all of Brahma’s [732] skills had been used up in creating the form that has now left. The women of Vraja were devoted to him. They were overwhelmed by his laughter, dalliances and pastimes. They followed him with their glances and their minds, leaving their tasks incomplete. He is compassionate towards those who are themselves peaceful, according to their own natures, but suffer at the hands of those who are otherwise. He is the lord of the highest and the lowest. [733] Though he has no birth, the illustrious one was born like the fire, [734] united with a part of Mahat. I grieve that the one who has no birth was born in a degraded state in Vasudeva’s house. He was himself infinite in valour. However, because of fear, he left the city and dwelt in Vraja. [735] I grieve when I remember that he worshipped the feet of his parents and said, “O father! O mother! We are extremely scared because of Kamsa. Since we have not been able to perform our duties towards you, please pardon us.” If a man has smelt the dust on the lord’s lotus feet, he will not be able to forget the

lord. Like Death, he knit the eyebrows and chastised and removed the earth's burden. Indeed, you have seen how Chedi hated Krishna, but obtained success at the royal sacrifice. [736] All the yogis desire this ultimate end and practise yoga. How can one tolerate separation from him? In that way, there were other brave ones in the world of men. In the battle, their eyes drank in Krishna's lotus face, delightful to see. Purified by Partha's weapons, they obtained his feet. He has no peer and is himself the lord of the three [737] and superior to them. His own kingdom is full of prosperity and all the objects of desire. All the guardians of the worlds offer sacrifices to him. Crores of diadems bow down before his hallowed feet. Thus, we were indeed his servants and attendants. O dear one! It pained us that he stood before Ugrasena, who was seated on a grand throne, addressed him as a lord and asked him to listen to him. Alas! The female crane [738] had virulent poison in her breasts. The wicked one wished to kill him and nurtured him with this. However, she obtained a state [739] that was appropriate for a proper nurse. Who is as compassionate as him? Which refuge will we go to? I think that the asuras are devotees of the illustrious lord of the three. They focused their intelligence along the path of enmity towards him, though they could see him descend with the weapon with the excellent nave, [740] on the shoulders of Tarkshya's son. [741] He was born to Vasudeva and Devaki, in the prison of the Indra among the Bhojas. [742] This was because the one without birth [743] prayed and wished that the illustrious one should bring about peace. Thereafter, terrified of Kamsa, his father brought him to Nanda in Vraja. With Bala, [744] he dwelt there for eleven years, like a fire whose flames are hidden. He was surrounded by cowherds. The lord wandered around, tending to calves. He roamed around along the banks of the Yamuna, in groves where the trees were thick with the calling of birds. When he was young, his deeds, worthy of being seen, could only be seen by the residents of Vraja. He wept and he laughed. He was enchanting to behold, like a young lion. He tended to the wealth in the form of cattle, with white cows and bulls, Lakshmi's abode. He herded them and the cowherds followed him and the tunes of his lovely flute. The king of Bhoja engaged those who could assume any form at will and were accomplished in maya. [745] Howev-

er, he killed them in sport, like a child destroying a puppet. There were those who were distressed because they had drunk the poison of the lord of the serpents. [746] However, he chastised him, arose [747] and made the cows drink the water, to show that it had been restored to its natural state. With supreme brahmanas, he made the king of the *gopa*s [748] perform a sacrifice dedicated to cattle. The lord desired to use the great wealth in this virtuous way. Enraged at the dishonour and extremely agitated, Indra showered down on Vraja. O fortunate one! Playfully, he showed his favours and saved them by holding up Govardhana like a mountain. The autumn evenings were radiant with the beams of the moon. He showed his respect for this by enjoying himself, singing melodious songs, with him at the centre and surrounded by a circle of women.'"'

Chapter 3(3)

"'Uddhava said, 'Desiring to ensure the welfare of his own parents, he went to the city with Baladeva. They brought down the leader of the enemies from his lofty seat. They killed him and energetically dragged him along the ground. Having heard them uttered only once, he studied and learnt all the Vedas from Sandipani. He granted him the boon of bringing his dead son back to life from Panchajana's stomach. [749] There were those who had been invited by Bhishmaka for his daughter and were attracted by her beauty and complexion. [750] However, he carried her off as his own desire, intending to follow the conduct of gandharvas [751] and taking away his own share, like Suparna. [752] He placed his foot on the heads of others. In a svayamvara, he tamed bulls whose noses had not been pierced and married Nagnajiti. [753] There were ignorant and routed ones who desired her and they wielded weapons. Without being injured, he killed them with his own weapons. The lord behaved like an ordinary person and wished to please his beloved. Therefore, the lord seized the tree [754] from the king of the gods. Blind with rage, the wielder of the vajra rushed towards him, with his companions, like a male deer that has been urged on by its wives. [755] The earth

saw that her son was about to devour the sky with his mouth and was crushed by the weapon with the excellent nave in a battle. [756] She prayed to him and he gave what was left of the kingdom to his son [757] and entered his inner quarters. There were daughters of kings who had been abducted by Kuja. [758] On seeing Hari, the friend of the afflicted, they were delighted and immediately arose. They glanced at him, eyes full of bashfulness and affection, and accepted him. [759] Those women were placed in different chambers. He used his maya and simultaneously, in the same muhurta, married all of them, following the respective prescribed rites. He desired to expand his Prakriti. Therefore, through each of them, he had ten sons each, who were like him in every possible way. Kala, [760] Magadha [761] and Shalva laid siege to the city [762] with their armies. He energized his own men with his divine energy and got them killed. [763] There were Shambara, Dvivida, Bana, Mura, Balvala and others like Dantavakra. He killed some himself and had others killed. [764] The lord had the kings who sided with your brothers' sons, [765] making the earth tremble with their armies, brought down in Kurukshetra. Suyodhana listened to the wicked advice of Karna, Duhshasana and Soubala and was forced to lie down on the ground with his followers, robbed of his prosperity and lifespan. The powerful one's thighs were shattered. However, on seeing this, he was not happy. "This great burden of the earth has been removed. [766] Eighteen akshouhinis have been uprooted by Drona, Bhishma, Arjuna and Bhima. However, there remains an invincible army of Yadus, born from my portions. They will quarrel with each other. They will be intoxicated by drinking and their eyes will turn coppery red. With the exception of this, there is no other way to destroy them. After I have vanished, this will automatically happen." Having thought this, the illustrious one established Dharmaja [767] in his own kingdom. He delighted his well-wishers and showed virtuous people the path. Through Abhimanyu, Uttara bore the descendant of the Purus. He was burnt down by the weapon of Drona's son, but was again brought back to life by the illustrious one. The lord made Dharma's son perform three horse sacrifices. He followed Krishna and with his younger brothers, happily protected the earth. The illustrious one is the atman of the universe. He traversed the path of the

Vedas, followed by the worlds. He enjoyed all the objects of pleasure in Dvaraka. However, he was non-attached and based himself on samkhya. His glances were gentle and smiling. His words were akin to nectar. His character was without blemish. His atman was Shri's abode. He brought joy to this world and the next, especially to the Yadus. During the night, as a well-wisher, he gave short spans of time to the women and made them enjoy for a while. He thus found pleasure for many years. However, detachment towards the mode of life of householders set in. Objects of pleasure are subject to destiny. Man himself is subject to destiny. A person who follows the lord of yoga cannot find solace in such things alone. Once upon a time, the princes of the Yadus and the Bhojas were playing. The sages, who knew the intentions of the illustrious one, cursed them. Some months passed. Confounded by the god, the Vrishnis, Bhojas, Andhakas and others cheerfully went to Prabhasa on their chariots. They bathed there and offered the water to the ancestors, the gods and the rishis. They satisfied the brahmanas by giving them cows that possessed many qualities. They gave them gold, silver, beds, garments, hides, blankets, vehicles, chariots, elephants, maidens and land for sustenance. They gave them delicious food that had first been offered to the illustrious one. Those brave ones served cattle and brahmanas and bowed their heads down on the ground.'"'

Chapter 3(4)

"'Uddhava said, 'Having been permitted by them, they ate and drank varuni. [768] They were deprived of their senses and pierced each other's hearts with harsh words. Because of the taints associated with the *maireya*, [769] they lost their mental equilibrium. There was a sound like that of bamboos rubbing against each other. The illustrious one saw what had been brought by his own maya. He touched the waters of the Sarasvati and sat down at the bottom of a tree. The illustrious one removes the afflictions of those who seek refuge with him. However, he desired to destroy his own lineage and told me to go to Badari. O destroyer of enemies! Though I

knew about his intentions, I followed my master at the rear. I was incapable of distancing myself from his feet. I saw my beloved lord seated alone, thinking. The one who is Shri's abode had found shelter near the Sarasvati, as if he was without a shelter. His clear and beautiful complexion was dark. His eyes, red like the rising sun, were tranquil. He could be recognized because of his four arms and his yellow silk garments. At that time, a devotee of the illustrious one arrived there. [770] He was devoted to him and was Dvaipayana's friend and well-wisher. He had obtained success and had been travelling around the world, as he wished. The sage was attached to Mukunda. His mind was delighted and his shoulders were bent down. While he heard, he [771] smiled affectionately at me. He glanced at me. After I rested, he spoke to me.

"'"The illustrious one said, "I am inside all minds and know what you wish for. What I give you will be extremely difficult for others to obtain. O Vasu! [772] In ancient times, the creators of the universe [773] and the Vasus performed a sacrifice, desiring to obtain success from me. O virtuous one! This is your last birth, since you have obtained my favours. I am in this secluded spot, so as to leave the world of men, and you have come to me, fixed in your devotion. It is your good fortune that you have seen me. In ancient times, at the beginning of the original creation, I spoke to Aja, [774] who was situated in the lotus in my navel. This was supreme knowledge, indicating my greatness. The gods refer to this as the Bhagavata." I was thus addressed by the supreme Purusha. I have obtained his favours at every instant. Because of my affection, my body hair stood up. My words faltered. I wiped the tears from my eyes, joined my hands in salutation and said, "Our lord! If a person serves at your lotus feet, which of the four objectives of the world [775] will be difficult to obtain? O great one! Even then, I am not asking for any of them. I am eager to serve at your lotus feet. You have no birth. But you have taken birth and have performed actions in this world. Fearing the enemy, you have run away and have sought shelter in forts. You are destiny, but you have sported with women in an ashrama. [776] Enjoyment is in your atman. In this world, the intelligence of the learned has been confused because of this. Without hesitation, you have summoned me for consulta-

tions. However, your knowledge is always complete. O lord! You are never confused or agitated, but you have asked. O god! Because of this, our minds are confused. Your own atman illuminates supreme knowledge. O illustrious one! Tell us everything that you told Ka. [777] O lord! If we are capable of receiving it, explain it to us in detail, so that we can cross over these miseries." I thus expressed the desire of my heart to the supreme and illustrious one. The lotus-eyed one instructed me about the supreme state of his atman. I worshipped the tirthas of his feet. I studied the truth about the atman, the path of understanding. I bowed down at his feet and circumambulated the god. Separated from him and with my soul afflicted, I have come here. O lord! His sight is pleasure and I am afflicted at being separated from him. I will go to Badarikashrama, associated with him and loved by him. That is where the gentle god Narayana and the illustrious rishi, Nara, performed austerities for a long time, tormenting themselves for the welfare of the worlds.'"

'Shri-Shuka said, "Kshatta heard from Uddhava about the death of his well-wishers and this was impossible to tolerate. Using his knowledge, the learned one pacified himself and controlled the increasing grief.

'"'Vidura said, 'The lord, the lord of yoga, spoke to you about the supreme knowledge that illuminates the atman. The servants of Vishnu roam around for the sake of those who serve them. Therefore, if we deserve to hear it, tell us about it.'

'"'Uddhava replied, 'For the truth, you must certainly worship the rishi Kousharava, who is nearby. When he was about to leave the world of mortals, the illustrious one instructed him himself.'"

'Shri-Shuka said, "Thus, Aupavaga's son [778] conversed with Vidura about the qualities of the one whose form is the universe. He was overwhelmed by anguish and this nectar pacified him for some time. He spent the night on the banks of the Yamuna and departed."

'The king asked, "The great charioteers, the best of the commanders and leaders among the Vrishnis and the Bhojas were destroyed after Hari, the lord of the three, [779] gave up his body. How did Uddhava alone remain?"

'Shri-Shuka replied, "He wished to draw in his own lineage, which was excessively populated. He is the death who arrived in the form of the curse unleashed by the brahmanas. When he was about to give up his body, this is what he thought of. 'There is knowledge that is vested in me. Right now, Uddhava is supreme among those who know about the atman. When I leave this world, he is the one who deserves to know about me. Uddhava is not inferior to me in any way. The lord is not disturbed by the qualities. Therefore, let him remain in this world, so that people get to know about me from him.' Thus, he was instructed by the preceptor of the three worlds, the one who is the origin of the Vedas. Content, he went to Badarikashrama and meditated on Hari. Vidura heard from Uddhava about Krishna, the supreme atman, about how he had accepted a body for his pastimes and about his praiseworthy deeds. The account of his giving up his body increases the patience of those who are persevering. But it is extremely difficult for others to understand, since they are like animals whose souls are agitated. O best among the Kurus! He [780] knew that he had been in Krishna's mind. When he [781] left, he meditated on the illustrious one and wept, distracted because of his love. O bull among the Bharata lineage! He passed a few days on the banks of the Kalindi. [782] He then went to the heavenly river, [783] where the sage who was Mitra's son [784] was."'

Chapter 3(5)

'Shri-Shuka said, "Maitreya's understanding was unfathomable and he was seated at the source of the heavenly river. [785] The undecaying one was perfect in his sentiments. Satisfied with his good conduct and qualities, Kshatta, bull among the Kurus, approached him and asked him.

'"'Vidura said, 'O illustrious one! People perform acts for the sake of happiness. However, they do not obtain happiness or any other contentment. Instead, they obtain miseries through these. Please explain to us what is appropriate. People who have turned themselves away from Krishna are destined to be extremely miserable and prone to adharma in conduct. Indeed,

fortunate and great beings wander around to show them Janardana's favours. The illustrious one is in the hearts of men. O noble and virtuous one! Instruct us about the path whereby he is served. He grants purification to those who are devoted to the ancient accounts, through which, one learns about true knowledge. The illustrious one is the lord of the three. [786] He controls himself and assumes avataras to perform deeds. He is without desire. But he created the universe at the beginning, and establishing it, determined the mode for its sustenance and regulation. All of this will again enter into him, in the form of space. When he lies down, all of this will withdraw from activities and will be secreted within him. He is alone the lord of yoga and the lord of everything. He is the one who entered everything, in many different forms. For the welfare of brahmanas, cows and gods, he indulged in pastimes. He performed deeds in the form of different avataras. Our minds are not satisfied at hearing about these. The lord Punyashloka's accounts are like amrita. The protector and lord of the worlds created many kinds of differences, the superior worlds, the inferior worlds and the guardians of the worlds. He is the one who devised the creation of every kind of existence and made it appear as if they occupy different kinds of forms. O noble brahmana! Narayana's source is his own atman. He is the creator of the universe. He is the one who arranged many kinds of creatures, differentiated according to souls, activities, forms, names, seeds and varnas, including those who are not born. Tell us about this. O illustrious one! From Vyasa's mouth, I have repeatedly heard about superior and inferior kinds of vows. I am content with that, but these bring about limited kinds of happiness. What can satisfy, but for the flood of amrita that results from Krishna's account? How can one be satisified without hearing about the one whose feet are tirthas? The gods worship him through sacrifices. When it [787] enters a man through his ears, it severs the bondage of birth and existence as a householder. Your friend, Krishna, [788] described and spoke about the illustrious one's qualities in Mahabharata. In that, people derive pleasure from mundane accounts. However, their minds are drawn towards Hari's account. A man's faith is thus increased and he becomes indifferent towards everything else. If he does not withdraw from remembering Hari's feet, all

his miseries are quickly destroyed. I sorrow about those pitiable ones. I grieve about those ignorant ones. Because of their sins, they turn away from Hari's account. The god of time diminishes the lifespans of those who indulge in futile speech and physical and mental action. O Kousharava! Hari's accounts bestow happiness. Distil out the essence from those accounts, like the essence is taken out of flowers. O friend of those who are afflicted! Tell us the auspicious accounts of the one whose deeds are like tirthas. For the sake of the creation, establishment and control of the universe, he invoked his powers. He performed superhuman deeds. Tell us about the lord's deeds.'"

'Shri-Shuka said, "The illustrious sage, Kousharava, was thus asked by Kshatta. Honouring him, for the sake of the great welfare of men, he started to speak.

'"Maitreya replied, 'O virtuous one! You have asked an excellent question and have thus shown your favours to the worlds and your inclinations towards virtue. Your atman is in Adhokshaja and your own fame will also spread throughout the world. O Kshatta! There is nothing surprising in this. You were born from Badarayana's seed. Therefore, without being distracted by anything else, you have accepted the lord, Hari. You were the illustrious Yama, the controller of beings. Because of Mandavya's curse, [789] you have been born as the son of Satyavati's son, in his brother's field, through a servant-maid. [790] You have always been respected by the illustrious one as one of his companions. When the illustrious one departed, he told me to instruct you about this knowledge. Progressively, I will describe to you the illustrious one's pastimes and his yoga maya, used for the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe. As he wills, the lord is himself present in all atmans. In the beginning, the illustrious one was alone. One can perceive his atman through one's own atman, following the many different kinds of signs. He is the seer. He is the lord of everything that can be seen. But at that time, he saw nothing. [791] He thought of himself as someone who was non-existent. His strength was asleep, but his sight was not asleep. He is the one who sees perfectly. He is the power behind cause and effect. O immensely fortunate one! This is named maya and the lord used this to create

everything. Through the progress of time, Adhokshaja characterizes the gunas with his maya. Purusha is his own part and the valiant one uses his seed to impregnate. [792] Thus, urged by time, the Mahat tattva was manifested from what was not manifest. He manifested this body and the illumination that would dispel all the ignorance of darkness in the universe. His part, [793] the gunas and time are within the range of vision of the illustrious one. With a desire to create the universe, he manifested his atman in yet another form. [794] Mahat tattva was transformed and led to the creation of ahamkara—in the form of cause, effect and the sense of being the doer. These are based on the elements, the senses and the mind. These transformations are of three kinds—vaikarika, taijasa and tamasa. The ahamkara in the mind results from vaikarika. The divinities [795] and the perceptions of the senses also result from vaikarika. Taijasa results in the sense of knowledge and action. Tamasa results in the subtle elements [796] and space, which is the means of knowing the atman. The illustrious one looked at space, which came about through interaction between time, maya and his portion. Touch resulted from space. It went through modifications and led to the creation of air. Though it possessed the strength of space, air went through modifications. It created the tanmatra of form and light, the eye of the worlds, was produced from this. He glanced at the interaction between air and light. Through the association with time, maya and his portion, water and taste were created. He looked at water, which was created from light. Through the association with time, maya and his portion, earth and the attribute of smell were created. O virtuous one! The learned ones know that space and the other elements, progressively possess the attributes of the ones that have come before them. [797] In the hierarchy, each has been touched by the preceding one. The divinities of the elements, time, maya and the signs are all parts of Vishnu. Because they were engaged in their own individual actions, they were not able to perform. They joined their hands in salutation and addressed the lord. The divinities said, 'O god! We bow down at your lotus feet. They are like an umbrella that subdues the heat of those who seek refuge with them. Great mendicants seek shelter there and fling away the miseries of this world. O supreme one! You are the creator and the lord.

Living beings suffer from three kinds of torment [798] and cannot find peace. O illustrious one! They obtain shelter and knowledge at your feet and we are also seeking refuge there. The best of rivers, the cleanser of sins, [799] flows from there. Detached rishis turn their strides towards your feet and seek shelter there. Your feet are tirthas. The Vedas are like birds that search out and make their nests in your lotus mouth. We will hear about you. With faith and devotion, we will meditate on you in our hearts and be cleansed. Through knowledge, non-attachment, strength and perseverance, we will go to the lotus feet and seek sanctuary there. For the sake of the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe, you assume the forms of avataras. O lord! All of us will find shelter at your lotus feet, the remembrance of which grants freedom from fear to the men who are devoted to you. There are those who are bound down to non-permanent bodies and homes. They are deeply attached to the undesirable elements of "I" and "mine". Though you reside within the body, such men are extremely far away from you. O illustrious one! We will worship at your lotus feet. O supreme lord! Those who are attached to futile objects in their conduct and to the senses are those whose minds are far away from the supreme. O great one! Therefore, they do not see the bliss at your feet, discerned by those who seek shelter there. O god! There are those who drink the nectar of your account. Their store of devotion is extensive. They obtain the comprehension that is the essence of non-attachment. They swiftly obtain their place in Vaikuntha. There are others who resort to *samadhi yoga*. Through that strength, they conquer the powerful Prakriti. Those persevering ones enter you, Purusha. However, theirs is a path of hardships, which doesn't exist for those who are devoted to you. You were there before the creation of the worlds. Through the three qualities, [800] you have yourself progressively created us. All of us are separated and are acting for our own pleasures. Therefore, we are unable to render to you what belongs to you. O one without birth! At the right time, what offerings will we offer you, so that we can partake of the rest of the food? Without any difficulties, what offerings will the residents of the world offer both you and us, so that they can partake of the rest of the food? You are the mysterious, ancient and original Purusha.

You are the cause behind the different kinds of gods. O god! The qualities, acts and births are based on your powers. O one without birth! You have impregnated all living beings with your seed. What can we and Mahat and the others do for you, so that we can accomplish the purpose for which we have been created out of your atman? O god! Grant us your insight and powers and show us your favours, so that we can do what we are supposed to.'''

Chapter 3(6)

"'The rishi said, 'The lord of all movement heard the assembled ones and the fact that their powers to create the worlds were dormant. With the goddess, Urukrama entered the destructive force known as Kala. [801] He simultaneously entered the twenty-three tattvas. [802] Having entered the group, which were acting separately, the illustrious one acted so as to bring them together and awaken their dormant capacity to work. The capacity to work of that group of twenty-three was thus roused by the god. Urged, they contributed their individual parts and gave rise to Virat Purusha. A portion of the supreme one entered the group of those that would lead to the creation, but were hitherto agitated. They now combined with each other and created Virat Purusha. The worlds and mobile and immobile objects were in him. This Purusha was golden and contained all living beings. However, for one thousand years, he was inside the cosmic egg that was spread out in the waters. With creation inside him, Virat possessed the divine powers of knowledge, action and spirit. He was one, but divided himself into ten and three. [803] This [804] is infinite and the atman inside all creatures. He is himself part of the paramatman. He is the first avatara and the creation of the large number of entities is based on him. He has three forms—adhyatma, adhidaiva and adhibhuta. Virat has ten forms of prana, which connect as one in the heart. Adhokshaja, the lord, remembered what the principles of creation had asked of him. [805] Having thought about it, he had used his own energy to manifest Virat, so that their powers could be extended. Hear from me about how Vi-

rat performed austerities to create various places of residence for the divinities within himself. Agni, the guardian of the world, had a differentiated place of residence within his mouth, along with his power of words. Thus, speech could be expressed. Varuna, the guardian of the world, had a place of residence within Hari's [806] palate, along with his power of tongue. Thus, taste was manifested. The two Ashvins, guardians of the worlds, had a differentiated place of residence within Vishnu's [807] nostrils, along with their power of smell. Thus, the capacity to smell was manifested. Tvashta, the guardian of the world, had a differentiated place of residence within the lord's eyes, along with his power of sight. Thus, the capacity to distinguish form was manifested. Anila, [808] the guardian of the world, had a differentiated place of residence within his skin, along with his power of prana. Thus, touch was manifested. When the ears were created, this was the differentiated place of residence for the divinities of the directions, along with the power of hearing. Thus, one can successfully experience sound. When the skin was created, [809] this was the differentiated place of residence for the divinities of the herbs, along with their parts of body hair. Through this, the sensation of itching is experienced. The penis was created and the divinity, Ka, [810] seated himself in this differentiated place of residence, along with the portion of semen. Through this, sexual pleasure is experienced. Purusha's anus evolved and Mitra, the guardian of the world, entered there, along with his portion of the excretory organ. Through this, evacuation is ensured. The hands were created and Indra, the lord of heaven, entered there, along with his power of undertaking merchant transactions. Thus, men obtained a means of sustenance. The feet were created and Vishnu, the guardian of the world, entered there, along with his own portion of locomotion. Thus, men can reach their desired destinations. Intelligence was created and the lord who is the guardian of speech [811] entered there, along with his power of comprehension. Thus, the object of comprehension is experienced. The heart was created and the moon god entered there, along with his portion of the mind. Thus, many kinds of transformation can be understood. When the atman was created, the lord of *abhimana* [812] entered that spot, along with his portion of karma. Through this, the intended action is

undertaken. Sattva was created and Mahat entered there, along with his portion of consciousness. Through this, correct understanding is obtained. The heavenly planets were created from his head, the earth from his feet and the sky from his navel. Surrounded by their gunas, the gods and the others became manifested there. [813] Gods obtained heaven because they have an excess of sattva. Those who have transactions with them, and their followers, remained on earth, because of their nature of rajas. [814] Those who possess the third kind of nature [815] inhabited the illustrious one's navel. The space that is between the two [816] is inhabited by the large number of Rudra's companions. O extender of the Kuru lineage! The brahman [817] emerged from Purusha's mouth. Brahmanas, preceptors and foremost among the varnas, also emerged from the mouth. The power of protection emerged from the arms and so did the kshatriyas, who follow that vow. This varna was born from Purusha so that it could save from the mischief caused by thorns. [818] Production, trading and the means of subsistence were created from the lord's thighs and so were vaishyas. This is how humans engage in trade transactions. Servitude that is necessary for attaining dharma was born from the illustrious one's feet. Earlier, the shudras were also born from here and they please Hari through service. Following their own dharma, these varnas worship their own preceptor, Hari, from whom they were born. They follow their means of subsistence and faithfully purify themselves. O Kshatta! Who can dare to measure or describe the illustrious one's divine deeds, atman and forms? Everything has resulted from the strength of his yoga maya. O dear one! Despite that, I have recounted according to my intelligence and according to what I have heard. It is for the purpose of purifying my speech that I have described Hari's deeds. It is said that speaking about the qualities of Punyashloka and talking about Purusha is a supreme benefit. His forms and deeds have been properly described by the learned in sacred texts and these accounts are like nectar. O child! The first wise one [819] used his intelligence to perfect his yoga and meditated on him for one thousand years. Even after this, did he comprehend the greatness of his atman? The illustrious one's maya confounds those who possess powers of maya. Since he himself doesn't understand its course, how can others comprehend it?

Words and mind are unable to reach him. Ego [820] and the other gods have failed and returned. I bow down to that illustrious one.’”’

Chapter 3(7)

‘Shri-Shuka said, “Maitreya said this. Vidura, Dvaipayana’s learned son, replied pleasantly, as if he was requesting.

‘“Vidura said, ‘O brahmana! The illustrious one is formed out of pure consciousness. How can he be subject to transformations? Even when he is engaged in pastimes, he is devoid of gunas and action that results from gunas. A child exerts itself to play because the desire to play comes from somewhere else. [821] He [822] is always satisfied within himself. He is non-attached and there is no one else. Through his own maya, the illustrious one has created the universe, consisting of gunas. He maintains it and repeatedly destroys it. The atman is unalloyed consciousness and is not affected by place, time and condition, either internal or external. How can it be united with maya? The illustrious one is one and is established in every body. How can he be subjected to the misfortune and hardships living beings face because of their karma? O learned one! I suffer from this calamity of ignorance and my mind is distressed. O lord! Therefore, remove this great illusion from my mind.’”

‘Shri-Shuka said, “The sage was thus urged by Kshatta, who wished to know about the truth. Free from arrogance and with his mind on the illustrious one, he smiled and replied.

‘“Maitreya answered, ‘This is the illustrious one’s maya and it is against all logic. The lord is free of all weakness and free of bondage. It may appear to a man [823] that he is facing a hardship and that his head is being chopped off. But all such things are not real. The trembling of the moon’s image in the water may be seen to be a quality of the moon. Similarly, a person who sees the atman ascribes qualities to it that do not belong to the atman. Through the dharma of non-attachment, Vasudeva’s grace and bhakti yoga towards the illustrious one, such misconceptions gradually disappear. When

the senses of the seer are satisfied at seeing the atman in the supreme Hari, all hardships vanish, as in the case of a person who is asleep. If one repeatedly hears the qualities of Murari being spoken about, all miseries are pacified. What is the need to speak about those who have realized their atmans and are attracted to serving the dust of his lotus feet?'

'"Vidura asked, 'O lord! The sword of your excellent words has severed my doubts. My mind can now grasp both aspects of the illustrious one. [824] O learned one! You have virtuously explained that all these movements are because of Hari. They appear to be meaningless and without any foundation. However, the foundation of the universe is not outside. [825] The stupidest person in the world and the person who has obtained supreme intelligence both enjoy happiness. It is the person who is between the two who suffers from miseries. I have ascertained that even though all this appears to exist, it has no meaning. It is not the atman. By serving at your feet, I will be able to cast aside misconception. There are those who serve the illustrious and mysterious one, Madhu's enemy. [826] If one has a deep urge to serve at their [827] feet, all afflictions are destroyed. There are those who are on the path towards Vaikuntha. That is a place where Janardana, god of the gods, is always glorified. However, those who are limited in austerities find it very difficult to serve them. At the beginning of creation, the lord progressively created Mahat and the others and their modification and having manifested Virat, entered there. This [828] is known as the original Purusha, with one thousand legs, thighs and arms. The universe, the worlds and their developments are located in him. There are ten types of prana in him and for the sake of the senses, the three kinds of organs of sense. [829] You have also explained about the varnas. Please tell us now about his powers. Everything was populated with his sons, grandsons, grandsons through the daughter, those from different gotras and subjects with many different kinds of form. Who was the lord of the Prajapatis? Who decided on the Prajapatis? What were the creations and the subsidiary creations? Who were the Manus and the lords of the manvantaras? O Mitra's son! Which worlds exist above and below the earth? What is their position and size? Describe the earth to me. Tell us about the different categories of created beings—inferior species,

humans, gods, reptiles, birds, those born from the womb, those born from sweat, those born from eggs and trees and herbs. Describe to us the extensive valour of the one who is Shri's abode. He is the creator of the universe, sustains the creation and it is into him that everything merges after destruction. According to gunas, what are his various avataras? [830] According to form, conduct and nature, what are the various categories of varnas and ashramas? What about the birth and death of the rishis and the divisions of the Vedas? O lord! What are the details of sacrifices and the different paths of yoga? What about the *naishkarmya* [831] of samkhya and tantra, as expounded by the illustrious one? O brahmana! O unblemished one! Imperfect paths followed by heretics; the status obtained by the offspring of a *pratiloma* marriage; [832] depending on their qualities and deeds, the different destinations obtained by living creatures; dharma, artha, kama, moksha and the means of ensuring that there is no conflict between them; the different occupations; principles of punishment; the rituals described in the sacred texts; the rites for funeral ceremonies; the creation of the ancestors; the planets, nakshatras and stars; the duration of different measurements of time; the fruits of donations, austerities and auspicious acts like digging ponds; the dharma to be followed when one is away from home and when men face adversities; and the means whereby the illustrious Janardana, the source of dharma, is pleased—describe all this to me. O supreme among brahmanas! Preceptors are compassionate towards those who are distressed. Even without being asked, they explain things to followers, disciples and sons. O illustrious one! At the time of dissolution, in how many ways are the tattvas withdrawn? After this, who survives and worships him while he is asleep? What is the place for Purusha and what is his supreme state? What is the knowledge in the sacred texts? What is the need for an association between a guru and a *shishya*? [833] O unblemished one! In this world, what are the means whereby the wise can acquire knowledge? How does knowledge automatically develop in men who follow bhakti and non-attachment? I am asking you these questions because I wish to know about Hari's deeds. I am ignorant. Tell me as a friend. Because of maya, I have lost my vision. O unblemished one! All the Vedas, sacrifices, austerities and

donations do not amount to even a fraction of what is obtained by granting a living being freedom from fear.'"

'Shri-Shuka said, "The foremost among sages was thus asked by the foremost among the Kurus about what is described in the Puranas. His delight was enhanced at having been urged to describe the illustrious one's account. He smiled and replied."'

Chapter 3(8)

"'Maitreya said, 'The lineage of the Purus should indeed be served by those who are virtuous. All these protectors of the world [834] regard the illustrious one as the foremost. You have been born in this lineage and step by step, you bring new ways of increasing the garland of fame of the unvanquished one. Men pursue trifling joy and misery and are immersed in great hardships. I will speak about the Bhagavata Purana, which the illustrious one himself narrated to rishis, for the sake of dispelling these. The sages, with Kumara [835] at the forefront, desired to know the truth about the supreme one. They asked the illustrious and original god, Samkarshana, who was unimpeded in knowledge and who was seated on the ground. At that time, he was himself respectfully meditating on the one who is known by the name of Vasudeva. His eyes were closed, like the bud of a lotus. However, out of compassion for the learned ones, he opened them. The matted hair on the heads of the sages was wet with the waters of the celestial river [836] and they lowered these and touched his feet, which were like cushions. These lotus feet are lovingly worshipped by the daughters of the king of serpents, with offerings, when they wish for desirable husbands. His one thousand diadems glowed with gems and there was illumination from his one thousand hoods. [837] They knew about his deeds and were devoted to him and they repeatedly praised these in gentle and well-articulated words. Sanatkumara followed the dharma of *nivritti* [838] and indeed, he told him about the excellent Bhagavata. O dear one! When asked, he repeated it to Samkhyayana, who was firm in his vows. [839] Samkhyayana was foremost

among those who were paramahamsas. He desired to explain the powers of the illustrious one and recited it to our preceptor, Parashara, and then to Brihaspati. The sage Pulastya was kind and affectionate towards him. [840] Therefore, he told me about the original Purana. O child! That is what I will recite to you. You are faithful and always devoted to him. The entire universe was submerged in water. His eyes were closed in sleep, but yet not completely closed. He was alone, asleep on a bed consisting of the Indra among the serpents. [841] At that time, he was in bliss, within his own self, and there was nothing external. The subtle elements were subsumed within his body. He invoked his powers that were in the form of time. He was residing in his own abode within the waters, without displaying his energy, like fire hidden inside a piece of wood. He slept in the waters for one thousand aggregates of the four yugas. [842] With his own powers, he himself invoked what is known as time, so that action could be undertaken. He saw the worlds within his own dark body. He saw that the subtle elements were inside him. What was inside him was stirred by rajas. This guna followed time and was struck by it. Thus struck, it emerged from the area around the navel. The bud of a lotus flower appeared suddenly, urged by time to undertake action. With its own rays, this illuminated the extensive waters, like the sun. It emerged from the one who is his own source. Vishnu entered that universal lotus and it was imbibed with the radiance of all the gunas. From that lotus emerged the creator. [843] The Vedas are incarnate in him and we speak of him as Svayambhu. He was located on the stalk of the lotus and could not see any worlds. He cast his glance all around the sky and the four directions and thus obtained four faces. At the end of the yuga, there were storms that whirled around the waters and made the waves rise up. He sought shelter in the lotus. However, the original god could not comprehend the truth about the worlds [844] and about his own self. 'Who am I, seated on the lotus? How has this solitary lotus sprouted in the waters? There must be something underneath it. There must indeed be something supporting it.' Thinking this, he used the passage in the stalk of the lotus to enter inside the waters. However, despite going further and further down the stalk, Aja could not find the source of the lotus in the navel. Having not accomplished

his wish, he returned. The god again returned to his own seat. He gradually restrained his mind and controlled his breath. He sat down there, immersed in samadhi yoga. Aja engaged in yoga for a period equal to a man's lifespan [845] and developed his intelligence. What he had been unable to see earlier, could now automatically be seen within his heart. He saw a being lying down alone, using the body of Shesha, which was as white as the fibre of a lotus, as the couch. The darkness of the waters at the end of a yuga was dispelled by the radiance of the gems that were on the umbrella-like hoods. The evening clouds on the slopes are like a garment on the summit of a mountain of green emeralds. But his beauty surpassed that. [846] The golden peaks are a store of beautiful herbs, garlanded with trees. The bamboos are like arms and the trees are like legs. [847] The length, breadth and measure of his body encompassed the three worlds. He was attired in colourful divine ornaments and silk garments. His beautiful body was rendered even more beautiful by the ornaments and garments. There are men who, on their own, desire the path of devotion, and alone worship him in agreeable ways, serving his lotus feet, which yield all the objects of desire. Out of compassion, he shows them his feet, with toes like the moon. A lustre radiated from the extremely beautiful nails on his fingers. His smiling face removed the afflictions of the world and was made radiant by the dazzling earrings. His face was tinged red because of his lower lip, which had the hue of *bimba* fruit. His extremely well-formed nose and extremely well-formed brows were beautiful. O child! His garments were yellow, like the pollen of the kadamba flower. He adorned himself with a girdle around his hips. There was an extremely valuable necklace on his chest, which was marked with the beloved mark of shrivatsa. He wore extremely expensive armlets studded with the best of jewels. His arms stretched out, like a tree with one thousand branches. He was like an Indra among trees, encompassing the universe, but the roots could not be seen. The coils of the great serpent covered his shoulders. The illustrious one was like a large mountain, supporting mobile and immobile objects. He was surrounded by the deep waters and was a friend of the Indra among serpents. There were one thousand diadems that were like golden peaks. The Koustubha gem, born from the waters, was dis-

played on his chest. Hari wore a garland made out of wild flowers. The hymns of the Vedas surrounded his beautiful form and chanted his own glories. The sun, the moon, Vayu and Agni find him to be unapproachable. The weapons of the three worlds can't approach him and only circle around him. The creator [848] saw the lake in his navel and the lotus sprouting from it. He saw himself, the waters, the wind and the sky. The god looked at the universe and there was nothing beyond this. There was no other world and the insight about creation manifested itself in him. He was impregnated with rajas and the seed of action. Having seen what there was to see, he desired to create subjects. He fixed his mind on the god who was not manifest and worshipped him for the sake of creation and subsidiary creations.'"'

Chapter 3(9)

"'Brahma said, "I have got to know you today, after a very long time. It is a great defect to possess a body and such people do not get to know about the movements of the illustrious one. O illustrious one! Nothing other than you exists. Nothing else is pure. You are supreme, but appear differently because of maya and the mixture of the gunas. This form is of your eternal and internal powers. Through your favours to the virtuous, you dispel tamas. [849] You assumed this original avatara and it is the seed of a hundred others. I have myself been generated from an abode in the lotus in your navel. O supreme one! I do not see any form of yours that is superior to this one. It is full of bliss and without any transformations. Its radiance is not diminished in any way. You are the creator of the universe. You are the atman of the universe. You are the source of the elements and the senses. I seek refuge with you. O one who is auspicious for the universe! For the sake of welfare, you have shown yourself to the devotees who are meditating on you. O illustrious one! Therefore, we follow the rules and bow down before you. But you are not respected by those who are evil in their adherences [850] and are headed towards hell. There are those who inhale the fragrance that is in your lotus feet. The wind conveys chants from the sacred

texts to their ears. They devotedly seize your supreme feet. O protector! For their sake, never be separated from the lotus-like hearts of men who are devoted to you. There are those who suffer fear on account of wealth, physical bodies, well-wishers, grief, desire, dishonour and excessive greed. The reason for their affliction is their false sense of 'mine'. Until they seek shelter at your lotus feet, they will not obtain freedom from fear. Destiny destroys their intelligence. Their senses are averse to hearing about you, something that removes all kinds of inauspiciousness. Those distressed ones pursue desire, for a happiness that is only brief and fleeting. Their minds are overcome by avarice and they are always after the inauspicious. O Urukrama! They repeatedly suffer from hunger, the three *dhatu*s, [851] cold, heat, wind, rain and other such disturbances, the fire of sexual desire and an anger that is impossible to quench. On seeing them, I also become despondent. O lord! Because of the strength of the illustrious one's maya, people pursue their senses and perceive themselves as being distinct from the atman. As long as this continues, this cycle of worldly existence will not vanish. Instead, futile action performed for fruits will bring along miseries. O god! During the day, they perform deeds that lead to distress. During the night, they cannot sleep. The intelligent pursue many kinds of wishes. At every instant, the sleep is disturbed. Even rishis are affected by destiny and are averse to an association with you. Therefore, they roam around in this cycle of life. O protector! But there are indeed men who are completely immersed in bhakti yoga. They follow the path of listening to your glories. They obtain insight and you reside in their lotus hearts. O powerful one! Because of your favours towards these virtuous ones, you manifest yourself in whatever form their intelligence thinks of. He [852] is not satisfied if he is worshipped with expensive objects, nor if he is worshipped by large numbers of gods who are bound by some desire in their hearts. He is pleased by compassion towards all beings, which is a trait impossible to find in the wicked. He can be perceived in many kinds of beings. He is the well-wisher inside their atmans. There are many kinds of pious activities that people undertake. They perform rituals, they donate, they perform fierce austerities and they serve devotedly. O illustrious one! They worship you through such virtuous

deeds. This dharma is rendered unto you and it never perishes. Your own form is eternal. It is free from all differences and confusion. You are knowledge and intelligence. I bow down to the supreme one. It is for the sake of your pastimes that you indulge in the universe's creation, preservation and destruction. We offer our obeisance to this lord. The qualities of his avataras are the consequences of his mysterious deeds. At the time of death, if a person involuntarily chants these names, he can instantly give up the sins accumulated through many births and proceed to immortality, which is opened up. O unborn one! I seek refuge with you. I bow down before the illustrious one who is the cosmic tree. For the sake of creation, preservation and destruction, you yourself are the source for me, Girisha and the lord himself. [853] There is a single tree that has divided itself into three, with many branches. You restrain people who are negligent about their welfare and perform perverse deeds. You have yourself articulated deeds meant for your worship. But if their desire for remaining alive in this world remains strong, they ignore this and you instantly sever those hopes. I bow down to him. I have myself obtained a state of lordship that lasts for two parardhas. But I am terrified, [854] even though the region I inhabit is revered by all the worlds. Desiring to obtain you, I have tormented myself through austerities for many years. O illustrious one! I bow down to you. You are the lord of sacrifices. With a desire to preserve the ordinances, you have yourself created inferior species, humans, gods and other living creatures. You find pleasure in this, though you are not affected by material objects. You manifest yourself in the form of these bodies. O illustrious one! O Purushottama! I bow down before you. You do not suffer from the five kinds of ignorance in conduct. [855] Preserving all the worlds inside your stomach, you assume a state of sleeping inside the water. You sleep on the body of the serpent and find this touch to be pleasurable, though there are garlands of terrible waves around you. You do this for the sake of the happiness of the people. O one who should be worshipped! I was manifested from my abode in the lotus in your navel. Through your favours, I am an instrument for the creation of the three worlds. I bow down to you. All of creation is inside your stomach. Now that the yoga of your sleep is over, your eyes have opened like bloom-

ing lotuses. He is alone the atman and well-wisher for the entire universe. He is the illustrious one who brings happiness through his powers of sattva. Let him grant me insight, so that I can now create, so that everything is as it used to be before. [856] I prostrate myself before the beloved one. He is the one who grants boons to those who seek refuge with him. With Rama, [857] he uses his own powers to do everything. He assumes the gunas of the avataras. For the sake of creation, let his own valour be imbibed by my heart. Let it be united with me, so that I am freed from the material consequences of my action. [858] When Purusha was lying down, there was water in the pool in his navel. He is infinite in powers and I was created as *vijnana shakti*. [859] I am now engaged in manifesting all his many different kinds of forms. Let the Vedas not vanish before me and let me be correct in uttering them. The illustrious one is infinite in his compassion. Let him open his lotus eyes, filled with great affection. Let the ancient Purusha arise and for the sake of creating the universe, remove all our miseries through his sweet speech.'"

"'Maitreya said, 'Through his austerities, learning and meditation, he saw the source of his own creation. He praised him through his thoughts and words. As if exhausted, he then stopped. Madhusudana discerned Brahma's intentions and saw that he was distressed in his mind, with everything submerged in devastating waters at the end of a kalpa. He [860] was anxious that he did not know enough about creating the worlds. He spoke to him in deep words, so that all his dejection could be pacified.

"'"'The illustrious one said, "O Vedagarbha! [861] Do not yield to lassitude. Exert yourself for the sake of creation. What you prayed to me for, has already been obtained by you. Perform austerities yet again. Resort to me for knowledge. O Brahma! Through this, you will see all the worlds displayed inside your heart. O Brahma! When you meditate with devotion, you will see me pervading the worlds, me, the worlds and yourself in me. I am situated inside all creatures, like fire inside a piece of wood. When people see me in that way, they instantly cast off all sins. When a person sees that his atman is independent of the elements, the senses and the gunas, he realizes his own form and obtains me, the sovereignty that he desires. You wish to

create and extend many kinds of subjects and lay down deeds for them. In this regard, because my favours towards you will increase, you will never suffer from exhaustion. You are the first rishi and the sins of rajas guna will not bind you down, even when you are creating subjects. That is because your mind is firmly fixed on me. Those with bodies find it extremely difficult to know me. However, you have got to know me today. You have understood that I am not attached to bhutas, senses, gunas and ego. Using the stalk, you searched for the source of the lotus in the water and were unsuccessful in your search. I showed myself to you inside, in your own atman. O dear one! You addressed words of praise to me, about my deeds and my signs. That and your devotion towards austerities are both because of my favours. O fortunate one! I am nirguna. But desiring to be successful, you prayed to me in words describing my gunas. I am pleased with you. I am the supreme granter of boons and yield all the objects of desire. If a man always praises me, using the words you have used in your prayer and worships me, I will swiftly show him my favours. Those who know about the truth are of the view that good deeds, austerities, sacrifices, yoga and samadhi practised by men become supremely successful when they satisfy me. I am myself the controller of all atmans. I am the most loved of everything that is loved. One should only be attached to me. The body and everything else are loved for that reason alone. All the Vedas are vested in your atman and your atman has been generated from my atman. Create the subjects who are inside me, so that everything is as it used to be earlier.'"

'"Maitreya said, 'After instructing the creator of the universe, who was generated from the navel, the lord of Purusha and the foremost one, vanished inside his own form.'""

Chapter 3(10)

"'Vidura asked, 'When the illustrious one disappeared, how many different types of beings did the lord Brahma, the grandfather of the worlds, create from his body and his mind? O illustrious one! O one who is ex-

tremely learned! Please tell me progressively the details of what I have asked and dispel all my doubts."'

Suta said, 'O Bhargava! Sage Kousharava was thus urged by Kshatta. Pleased, he replied to the questions that were deep inside his [862] heart.

'Maitreya said, "Thereafter, Virinchi [863] performed austerities for one hundred divine years. As instructed by the one who has no birth, he fixed his atman on the illustrious one's atman. At that time, the one who was born from the lotus saw that the lotus on which he was seated and the waters were agitated by a wind that was extremely strong in force. His austerities enhanced his knowledge and stabilized his atman. As the strength of his knowledge increased, he swallowed the wind and the waters. He saw that the lotus on which he was seated extended everywhere. He thought that he would use this to create the worlds that had been submerged in the deluge. Urged to act by the illustrious one, he entered the bud [864] of the lotus. It was one and he divided it into three and later into fourteen. [865] Thus, the divisions and habitations of the worlds of the living were brought about. Parameshthi's pure region [866] is for those who perform acts of dharma without any desire for the fruits."

'Vidura said, "O brahmana! O lord! You have said that Hari, wonderful in his deeds, has many different forms. Please describe to us the signs and divisions of time."

'Maitreya replied, "It [867] has form because of the modifications of the gunas. It has no special characteristics and is not dependent on anything else. Purusha himself created it, as support for his pastimes. This universe is the brahman, established in Vishnu's maya. It is divided by the lord into time, which does not have any embodied form. This is exactly as it used to be in the past and it will be exactly the same in the future. There are nine different kinds of creation, resulting from Prakriti and *vikriti*. [868] Depending on time, matter and gunas, there are three kinds of destruction. [869] The first creation was Mahat, resulting from a disequilibrium in the gunas. The second creation was ahamkara, resulting from material objects, material knowledge and material action. The third creation was that of the subtle elements and the tanmatras, possessing the capacity to create the gross elements. The

fourth creation was of the senses, of knowledge and of action. The fifth creation was vaikarika and the mind evolved from this. O lord! The sixth creation was tamas and perverse intelligence resulted from this. These six creations result from Prakriti. Now hear about the creations that result from vikriti. These result from the illustrious one who has assumed the attribute of rajas, [870] who reflects Hari's intelligence and pastimes. In the seventh creation, the foremost ones are the six kinds of immobile objects—trees, herbs, [871] creepers, hollow plants, [872] strong creepers [873] and trees with fruits and flowers. [874] All of these draw up their nourishment from below and are full of tamas. In particular, their sense of touch is inside them. The eighth creation is of inferior animals and it is said that there are twenty-eight different kinds of these. They are ignorant and extremely full of tamas. They have a sense of smell, but are incapable of remembering anything in their minds. O excellent one! O Kshatta! They are the cow, goat, buffalo, black antelope, pig, *gavaya*, [875] the ruru antelope, [876] two-hooved animals like sheep and camels; and one-hooved [877] animals like the donkey, horse, mule, *goura*, [878] *sharabha* [879] and yak. O Kshatta! Hear about the five-nailed animals—the dog, jackal, wolf, tiger, cat, hare, porcupine, lion, ape, elephant, tortoise, lizard and makara. [880] The birds are the heron, vulture, crane, hawk, bird of prey, [881] owl, peacock, swan, *sarasa*, [882] ruddy goose and *uluka*. [883] O Kshatta! In the ninth creation, sustenance flows from top to bottom. Humans are the only variety here. They are dominated by rajas and are engaged in acting. Even if they are miserable, they think that they are happy. O excellent one! There are three kinds of vaikarika creation and the creation of gods is also of this type. The creation of the Kumaras [884] is said to be of both types. [885] The creation of gods is of eight types—*vibudha*s, [886] ancestors, asuras, gandharvas, apsaras, siddhas, yakshas, rakshas and charanas. [887] O Vidura! There are also bhutas, pretas, pishachas, vidyadharas and kinnaras. These are the ten categories [888] created by the creator of the universe. After this, I will tell you about the lineages and the manvantaras. In this way, at the beginning of every kalpa, Hari's atman is suffused with rajas and becomes the creator. His resolve to create is invincible and he creates himself out of his own atman."'

Chapter 3(11)

'Maitreya said, "There is an ultimate particle characterized by the trait that it cannot be divided further. It alone is combined with others. This is known as *paramanu*. When this is aggregated, [889] men are confused and take the aggregate to be the ultimate. When objects exist, they remain in their own forms inside them. Their solitary forms are supreme, great and eternal. [890] O excellent one! Time is measured both in subtle and gross forms. The illustrious lord is not manifest. However, he controls and enjoys all manifestations and states. The amount of time taken to occupy an atom is atomic time. The duration of time required to enjoy complete existence is known as supreme and great. Two paramanus make up one *anu* and three anus are said to constitute a *trasarenu*. This can be discerned to rise up in the net of the sun's rays through the lattice of a window. The time required to occupy three trasarenus is called a *truti*. One hundred trutis constitute a *vedha*. Three vedhas are said to be a *lava*. Three lavas are known to constitute a *nimesha* and three nimeshas make up a *kshana*. Five kshanas are known to be one kashtha and fifteen kashthas are one *laghu*. Fifteen laghus are referred to as one *nadika*. Two nadikas are one muhurta and six or seven nadikas constitute one *prahara* for men and this is also known as a *yama*. Let there be a copper vessel that is six *pala*s in weight, with sides measuring four *angula*s. Let a hole that is four angulas in length be made in it and let a golden wire four angulas long and one *masha* in weight be inserted into it. [891] The time taken for this to be submerged in water is one nadika. In the world of the mortals, there are four yamas during the day and four yamas during the night. O revered one! There are two *paksha*s, *shukla* and *krishna*, and each of these has fifteen days. Two of these make up a month, which is a day and a night for the ancestors. Two months make up a *ritu*. [892] Six months constitute an ayana and there are two of these—*uttara* and *dakshina*. [893] An ayana is said to be a day for the residents of heaven. [894] Twelve months constitute a year. One hundred years has been determined as the lifespan of humans. The lord eternally regulates the circling of the universe,

beginning with paramanu and encompassing orbits of planets, nakshatras and stars and years. O Vidura! It is said that there are periods of *samvatsara*, *parivatsara*, *idavatsara*, *anuvatsara* and *vatsara*. [895] He is the power behind creation. [896] In different ways, he is the one who uses his own powers to invigorate. He is the one who moves in the sky and drives away darkness for humans. He is the one who extends the elements. He is known as time. Through the extension of sacrifices, he is full of gunas. One should offer sacrifices to the one who has determined the five different kinds of years."

'Vidura said, "The maximum lifespans for ancestors, gods and humans has been determined. [897] Please tell me about the progress of those who are outside the kalpa. [898] O illustrious one! You certainly know about the progress of the illustrious one. Persevering ones who possess the insight of yoga can see everything in the universe."

'Maitreya replied, "The four yugas are krita, treta, dvapara and kali. The duration has been carefully determined as twelve thousand years of the gods. [899] Being with krita, the progressive duration is four thousand, three thousand, two thousand and one thousand years. Twice that number is again added, but in hundreds of years. The intervening period is known as sandhya and amsha and the duration is in hundreds of years. Those who know about the truth have determined the dharma for each specific yuga. In krita, humans nurtured dharma with all of its four feet. But in the other yugas, as adharma flourished, one foot was progressively diminished. [900] Outside the three worlds, one thousand yugas [901] is one of Brahma's days. O son! That is also the duration of the night and the creator of the universe sleeps during this period. When the night is over, the creation of the worlds proceeds afresh, from the beginning. Fourteen Manus exist during one of the illustrious one's days. [902] Each Manu respectively enjoys a period that is a little more than seventy-one. [903] In every manvantara, there are lineages of men, rishis, gods, saptarshis and gandharvas, in due order. Simultaneously, there are lords of the gods and those who follow them. [904] During each of Brahma's days, the three worlds, which circle around, are created. Depending on their deeds, they are born as inferior species, humans, ancestors and gods.

In each manvantara, the illustrious one manifests sattva in his different forms, such as Manu and the others. Thus Purusha preserves the universe which has been created. He then resorts only to tamas and withdraws all his powers. Everything comes under the subjugation of time and there is silence at the end of the day. The three worlds, the earth and the others, vanish into that darkness. They are completely enveloped in that night, without the existence of the sun and the moon. The powerful fire that emerges from Samkarshana burns down the three worlds. Bhrigu and the others are afflicted by the heat and go to janaloka from maharloka. At the end of the kalpa, the three worlds are deluged by the waters. There is a violent turbulence in that flood and terrible waves because of the fierce winds. Hari lies down in those waters, on the couch that is Ananta. Praised by the residents of janaloka, his eyes are closed in his sleep of yoga. These are the signs of time, with these kinds of night and day. One's maximum lifespan of one hundred years comes to an end. [905] Half of his [906] lifespan is known as parardha. The first parardha has passed and the subsequent parardha is passing now. At the time of the previous parardha, there was the great kalpa known as Brahma-kalpa. Brahma was born then and he was known as Shabda-Brahma. At the end of that kalpa, there was the kalpa known as Padma-kalpa. This was because the cosmic lotus was generated out of the waters in Hari's navel. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! This kalpa of the second parardha [907] is famous as Varaha-kalpa, because Hari assumed the form of a boar. The duration of two parardhas is measured as the blinking of the eye. [908] He is the infinite one who is not manifest. He is the one who does not change and has no beginning. He is the atman of the universe. The period from a paramanu to the end of the two parardhas is controlled by the lord of time, who has power over all those who pride themselves on their habitations. However, this lord [909] has no control over the supreme one. This cosmic egg is united with transformations and their various manifestations. On the outside, it extends for fifty crore. [910] Each sheath [911] is ten times larger than the preceding one. When they enter together, they are like a paramanu. [912] Crores of other such universes are seen to be inside him. This is said to be the brahman,

who is without decay. He is the original cause behind all causes. This is the supreme abode of Vishnu. He is himself the great-souled Purusha."'

Chapter 3(12)

'Maitreya said, "O Kshatta! The paramatman's manifestation as time and his greatness have thus been described to you. Now understand from me about Vedagarbha's [913] creation. He first created the various kinds of conduct associated with ignorance—*andha-tamisra*, *tamisra*, *mahamoha* and *moha*. [914] On seeing that this creation was wicked, Brahma was not proud of himself. He purified his mind by meditating on the illustrious one and created again. The one who was self-created created the sages Sanaka, Sananda, Sanatana and Sanatkumara. However, they were not interested in action and held up their seed. The self-created one spoke to his sons. 'O sons! Generate offspring.' But being devoted to Vasudeva and the dharma of emancipation, they were not interested in this. His sons disregarded him and refused his instructions. An intolerable rage was generated in him and he tried to control this. Though Prajapati used his intelligence to try and control it, it emerged from between his eyebrows. From this anger, a child who was blue and red [915] was instantly born. The illustrious Bhava, who preceded the gods, started to weep. 'O creator! O preceptor of the universe! Give me a name and a place to reside in.' The illustrious one who was born from the lotus honoured these words. He assured him in comforting words and replied, 'Do not cry. I will do so. O best among the gods! Since you have cried like an anxious child, subjects will address you by the name of Rudra. [916] I have already thought of places for you to reside in—the heart, the senses, the breath of life, the sky, the wind, fire, water, the earth, the sun, the moon and austerities. Manyu, Manu, Mahinasa, Mahan, Shiva, Ritadhvaja, Ugrareta, Bhava, Kala, Vamadeva and Dhritavrata. [917] O Rudra! Your wives are Rudranis and they are Dhi, Vritti, Ushana, Uma, Niyut, Sarpi, Ila, Ambika, Iravati, Sudha and Diksha. Accept these names and places. With your wives, as a lord, create a large number of offspring.' The illustrious Nilalo-

hita was thus instructed by his own preceptor. He created offspring who were like him in spirit, form and nature. In every direction, the fierce offspring created by Rudra were about to devour the universe. Witnessing these innumerable hordes, Prajapati was scared. He said, 'O supreme among the gods! Enough. There is no need to create subjects who are like this. Along with me, their blazing eyes are burning down the directions. O fortunate one! Resort to austerities that bring happiness to all creatures. It is only through austerities that you will be able to create a universe that is just like what it used to be before. It is only through austerities that a man can obtain the supreme light that is Adhokshaja. He resides in the hearts of all beings.' Addressed in these words by the one who created himself, he circumambulated the lord and agreed. He entered the forest to perform austerities. While thinking about creation, because he possessed the powers of the illustrious one, he [918] had ten sons, who would be responsible for populating the worlds—Marichi, Atri, Angiras, [919] Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Bhrigu, Vasishtha, Daksha and Narada as the tenth. Narada was born from Svayambhu's lap, Daksha from the thumb, Vasishtha was born from the breath of life, Bhrigu from the skin, Kratu from the hand, Pulaha from the navel, the rishi Pulastya from the ears, Angiras from the mouth, Atri from the eyes and Marichi was born from the mind. Dharma was born from the right breast, where Narayana himself resides. Adharma was generated from the back and Death, fearful to the worlds, results from him. Desire was from the heart, anger from the eyebrows, avarice from between the lips, speech from the mouth, the rivers from the penis and Nirriti, the source of all sin, from the anus. Kardama, the lord who was Devahuti's husband, was born from his shadow. The entire universe resulted from the mind and body of the creator of the universe. O Kshatta! He had a beautiful daughter, the goddess of speech, who was not interested in desire. However, we have heard that she captivated Svayambhu's mind and he was driven by desire. The sons saw that their father had made up his mind to perform an act of adharma. With Marichi at the forefront, these sages sought to respectfully dissuade him. 'What you are trying to do now has not been done by anyone else before, [920] nor will it ever be attempted by anyone else hereafter. O

lord! You are not controlling your desire and wish to have intercourse with your own daughter. O preceptor of the universe! You are energetic, but such acts are not applauded through excellent shlokas. People who follow such conduct are not among those who deserve to find peace. We bow down before the illustrious one. All this is in his atman and he manifested everything through his own radiance. He is the one who can save dharma.' He saw his sons, the Prajapatis, speaking in this way before him. The lord of all these Prajapatis [921] was ashamed and gave up his own body, which was accepted by the directions. An extremely terrible mist developed, known as darkness. Once, when the one with the four faces was meditating about creation, and about how all the assembled worlds should be as they had been earlier, the Vedas manifested themselves. The four kinds of officiating priests, the Upavedas, the four feet of dharma and the conduct in the four ashramas also manifested themselves."

'Vidura said, "O store of austerities! The Vedas manifested themselves from the mouths of the creator of the universe. Tell me about what the god created from where."

'Maitreya replied, "The Rig, Sama, Yajur and Atharva Vedas, the sacred texts, [922] oblations, chants of praise and rites of atonement were progressively generated from the face that was towards the front. He progressively also created *Ayurveda*, *Dhanurveda*, *Gandharva-veda* and the Vedas that are about architecture and sculpture also from the face that was towards the front. The lord who had insight about everything created the fifth Veda of Itihasa and Puranas from all his mouths. *Shodashi*, *uktha*, *purishi*, *agnistuta*, [923] *aptyorama*, *atiratra*, *vajapeya* and *gosava* [924] were created from the face that was towards the front. He created dharma's feet in the form of knowledge, donations, austerities and truth. He created the different kinds of ashramas, along with the conduct that should be followed in each of them—*savitra*, *prajapatya*, *brahma* and *brihat*; [925] *varta*, *sanchaya, shalina* and *shila-unccha* for householders; [926] for the forest, *vaikhanasa*, *valakhilya*, *audumbura* and *phenapa*; [927] in renunciation, *kutichaka*, *bahvoda*, *hamsa* and *nishkriya*. [928] Rules of logic, the three objectives, [929] norms for subsistence, the rules for punishment and the *vyahriti*s were manifested. [930]

Pranava [931] was manifested from his heart. The metres Ushnik, Gayatri, Trishtubh, Anushtubh, Jagati, Pankti and Brihati were respectively manifested from the lord Prajapati's body hair, skin, flesh, muscles, bones, marrow and breath of life. The consonants are said to be the being's sense organs and the vowels are his body. [932] The sibilant letters [933] are the strength of his atman. The seven notes of music resulted from Prajapati's pastimes. Shabda-Brahma is the illustrious one's atman and this atman is beyond the conceptions of being manifest and not being manifest. Brahma is his complete manifestation and is invested with many kinds of powers. Later, assuming another body, [934] he turned his mind to the task of creation. The rishis possessed a great deal of valour. But despite this, creation was limited. O Kourava! Having discerned this in his mind, he started to think again. 'This is extraordinary. Though I am always extending myself everywhere, yet, there aren't enough subjects. It is certain that destiny is causing the obstruction.' While he was thus engaged and thinking about destiny, Ka saw his body divide itself into two parts. This was known as Kaya. From these two divided forms, a couple was generated. The male part became the self-ruling Svayambhuva Manu. The female part became Shatarupa and she was the queen of the great-souled one. Following the dharma of sexual intercourse, they started to increase subjects. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! He had five children through Shatarupa. The sons were Priyavrata and Uttanapada. The three daughters were Akuti, Devahuti and Prasuti. He bestowed Akuti in marriage on Ruchi, the one in the middle [935] on Kardama and Prasuti on Daksha. The universe was populated in this way."'

Chapter 3(13)

'Shri-Shuka said, "O king! After hearing these extremely pure words from the sage, Kouravya, who loved to hear about Vasudeva's account, asked him again.

'"Vidura asked, 'The emperor Svayambhuva was Svayambhuva's beloved son. [936] O sage! What did he do after having obtained a beloved

wife? O excellent one! He was the first king and a royal sage. I am full of respect. Tell me about his conduct and about his resorting to Vishvaksena as a refuge. There are those who hold Mukunda's lotus feet in their hearts. The act of listening to their complete qualities is praised by the wise ones as yielding fruits equal to those obtained by men who study the sacred texts with a great deal of time and effort.'"

'Shri-Shuka continued, "Vidura humbly requested this, as if he had used the feet of the one with one thousand heads [937] as a pillow. Asked to recite the illustrious one's account, the sage's body hair stood up. Urged in this way, he started to speak.

'"Maitreya said, 'Syavambhuva Manu was born, along with his own wife. He joined his hands in salutation, bowed his head before Vedagarbha and said, "You alone are the father who has given birth to all beings and has given them a means of subsistence. Therefore, how can we subjects serve you? Command me. I am bowing down before you. O revered one! Depending on my capacity, what will I do, so that my fame spreads everywhere in this world and so that I obtain a proper destination in the world hereafter?" Brahma replied, "O son! I am pleased with you. With a pure heart, you have rendered yourself to me and have asked for instructions. O brave one! This is the kind of conduct that one should exhibit towards a senior. If one does this without distraction and to the best of one's capacity, the senior must gladly accept this, without any malice. Through her, have children who are like your own self in qualities. Follow dharma and rule the earth. Use sacrifices to worship Purusha. O king! The greatest service to me will come about through protecting the subjects. If you are a protector of the subjects, the illustrious Hrishikesha will be satisfied with you. The illustrious Janardana represents the limbs of the sacrifice. If he is not satisfied with a person, that person's efforts are in vain and he shows disrespect to his own atman." Manu answered, "O destroyer of sins! O illustrious one! I will abide by your instructions. O lord! Tell me about a place where I, and my offspring, can reside. The earth, the habitation of all beings, is submerged in this great mass of water. O god! Arrange for some efforts so that this goddess can be raised up." Parameshthi also saw that the earth was sub-

merged in water. “How can it be raised up?” He thought about this for a long time. “While I was creating, the earth was flooded by water and sank down to rasatala. What can we, engaged in the act of creation, possibly do? I was born from the lord’s heart. Let him instruct me.” O unblemished one! While he was thinking in this way, a boar emerged from his nostril and it was the size of a thumb. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! While he looked on, an extraordinary wonder occurred. Stationed in the sky, in an instant, it [938] increased to the size of an elephant. With the brahmanas, Marichi as the foremost, the Kumaras [939] and Manu, on seeing the form of the boar, he began to debate in many kinds of ways. “What is the spirit that is pretending to be a boar in the sky? It is extremely wonderful that it should have emerged from my nose. When it emerged, it was seen to be as small as a thumb. In an instant, it has become as large as a boulder. Is it the illustrious lord of sacrifices who is agitating my mind in this way?” In this way, while Brahma debated it with his sons, the illustrious Purusha, the lord of sacrifices and as large as a mountain, roared. Lord Hari delighted Brahma and the excellent brahmanas with his roar, which echoed in all the directions. They heard that tumultuous roar, which dispelled all their exhaustion. He had used his maya to adopt the form of the boar. The sages who were residents of janaloka, tapoloka and satyaloka praised him with sacred chants from the three. [940] His form is expounded in the Vedas and it is his qualities that are extolled in the form of the brahman and the devotees chanted this. Knowing this, out of compassion for those gods, he entered the water, sporting like a gigantic elephant. He traversed the sky, with the stiff hair on his tail raised up. The hair on his back quivered. Struck by his hooves, the clouds were dispelled. His tusks were white and his eyes were radiant and shining. The illustrious one is the saviour of the earth. He searched out the earth with his sense of smell. Though his body was the sacrifice, he assumed the form of a boar with terrible tusks. The brahmanas were praising him and he gently glanced towards them, entering the water. His body was as hard as a mountain made out of diamonds. As he fell into the water with great force, spreading out his arms, turbulent waves were created. The lofty waves were like arms stretched out in suffering, screaming, “O lord of sac-

rifices! Save me." His hooves were as sharp as razors and he clove through the waters with these. The lord of sacrifices [941] went to the furthest limits of the waters. He saw the earth, the abode of all creatures, sleeping there, as it used to do earlier. [942] He raised it up himself. He raised the submerged earth up on his own tusks and appeared in a resplendent form in the waters. [943] A daitya, invincible in valour, rushed towards him, wielding a club. [944] However, his blazing rage was like the weapon with the excellent nave. [945] Toying with him in the water like a lion, he killed this obstruction. His cheeks became red from the clotted blood, as if an Indra among elephants had been digging up the earth [946] with its tusks. His complexion was as blue as a tamala tree. His white tusks were curved and sporting like an elephant, he raised the earth up on his tusks. With Virinchi at the forefront, they understood that he was the lord. They joined their hands in salutation and chanted hymns from the Vedas to pray to him.

'"The rishis said, 'Victory to you. O one who cannot be vanquished! Victory to you. O creator of sacrifices! We bow down before you. You are shaking your body, formed out of the three. [947] Your pores and body hair are the sacrifices. We bow down to the one who assumed the form of a boar to raise up the one who was hidden. [948] O god! This is your form as sacrifices. [949] Those who are wicked in their deeds find it extremely difficult to see this form. The metres are your skin, the kusha grass is your body hair, the clarified butter is your eyes and the four types of officiating priests are your feet. O illustrious one! The sacrificial altar is your tongue, the ladles are your nose, the plates are your stomach, the spoons are your ears, the *prashitra* [950] is your mouth, the *graha* [951] is your throat and what you chew is *agnihotra*. Your repeated births are the initiation of the sacrifice, the *upasad*s are your neck, *prayaniya* and *udayaniya* are your tusks. [952] The *pravargya* [953] is your tongue, *kratu* is your head, both *sabhya* and *avasathya*. The bricks arranged for the sacrificial ceremony are your breath of life. The soma juice is your semen and the ablutions are your seat. O god! The seven kinds of sacrifice [954] are the elements of your body. All the sacrificial sessions are the joints of your body. You are the sacrifices and kratus, the ishtis are the tendons of your body. We bow down to you. You yourself are all the mantras, gods, all

the sacrificial objects, kratus and rites. We bow down to you. You are the knowledge that can be obtained through non-attachment, devotion and the perception that results from conquering one's atman. For the sake of learning, we repeatedly bow down before the preceptor. O illustrious one! O one who has held up the earth! With all its mountains, you have held up the radiant earth on the tips of your tusk. It looks like a lotus, with its leaves, resting on the tusks of a crazy and giant elephant that has just emerged out of the water. This is your form as a boar, full of the three. [955] You have held up the circle of the earth on your tusks and it shines like a mountain surrounded by the clouds. It looks as radiant as a *kulachala*. [956] For the sake of the people, establish this world, which is like a mother to the mobile and immobile objects. She is your wife and you are their father. Together with you, we bow down in obeisance before you. You have deposited your own energy in her, like fire in a piece of kindling. O lord! Who but you could decide to raise up the earth, which was submerged deep in the waters? However, this does not cause wonder, since you are the wonder behind this universe. Using your maya, you have performed the extremely wonderful act of creation. The Vedas constitute your body and we, the residents of janaloka, tapoloka and satyaloka, have been sanctified by the pure drops of water from your bristling body hair when you shook yourself. O lord! We have been sprinkled and have been extremely sanctified. There is no end to your deeds. A person who seeks to enumerate your deeds is confounded in his intelligence. You are full of yoga maya and the entire universe is confounded by the qualities of your maya. O illustrious one! Bestow good fortune on us.'

'"Maitreya said, 'He was thus praised by the sages who knew about the brahman. His hooves had agitated the water. He stabilized it and placed the earth there. Thus, in his pastimes, the illustrious Vishvaksena Prajapati raised up the earth from the deep and placed it in the waters. Thereafter, Hari departed. Hari destroys all miseries. Hari is full of maya and his extremely fortunate deeds are worthy of being recounted. If a person hears them, or makes others hear them, Janardana, who is inside the heart, is immediately pleased. When the lord of all benedictions is pleased, there is

nothing that is impossible to obtain. There is no need for trifling gains. Barring the worship of the one who is hidden everywhere, there is nothing else that is worthy of being seen. For those who are devoted to him, he himself confers the supreme destination, vested in him alone. The ancient accounts of the illustrious one are accounts full of nectar. They destroy all desire for material objects. Other than a person who is worse than human, who can refuse to drink this in through the ears? In this world, there are no other objectives of human existence.'"'

Chapter 3(14)

'Shri-Shuka said, "Vidura, firm in his vows, heard what Kousharava described, about Hari's account and about why he had assumed the form of a boar. However, he was still not completely satisfied. Therefore, he joined his hands in salutation and asked yet again.

'"Vidura asked, 'O best among sages! We have heard that the first daitya, Hiranyaksha, was slain by Hari in his form of a sacrifice. [957] O brahmana! In his pastimes, when he raised up the earth on the tips of his tusks, why was there a clash between him and the king of the daityas?'

'"Maitreya replied, 'O brave one! You have asked a virtuous question about Hari's avatara. The truth about the account you have asked severs the bondage of death for mortals. When he was a child, Uttanapada's son [958] heard the sage [959] sing about this account. After this, he placed his feet on death's head and ascended to Hari's abode. There is a history about this. In ancient times, I have heard it described by Brahma, the god of the gods, when the gods had asked him about this. O Kshatta! Diti, Daksha's daughter, had Kashyapa, Marichi's son, as a husband. In the evening, she was afflicted by desire and approached him, desiring a child. He was then meditating, controlled, seated in the place where the fire is worshipped. He had offered oblations into the tongues of the fire and had worshipped Purusha, the lord of sacrifices. The sun was about to set. Diti said, "O learned one! Kama's arrows are making me suffer and I desire you. I am distressed and

miserable. It has attacked me, like a mad elephant attacks a plantain tree. O fortunate one! I am tormented because my co-wives are prosperous because they have children. Do this for me and show me your favours. The fame of women who are respected by their husbands spreads throughout the world. You are my husband and in the form of my sons, it is you who will be born through me. My illustrious father, Daksha, loved his daughters. In earlier times, he separately asked each of us, 'O daughter! Whom do you desire to choose as a husband?' However, since he knew about the thoughts of his children, he knew what his daughters wanted. He handed over thirteen of us to you, the possessor of good conduct, and we have followed you. O lotus-eyed one! Therefore, fulfil my desire and make me fortunate. If an afflicted person approaches a great being, the wishes should not remain unsatisified." O brave one! Miserable, she spoke many words to Marichi's son. Thanks to Ananga, her desire was increasing and he replied to her in words of entreaty. "O beloved one! O timid one! I will do whatever you desire. The three objectives of human existence are for you and who will refuse your wish? A ship can be used to cross the ocean. Like that, a person with a wife follows the norms of his own ashrama and crosses over this ocean of grief, [960] thus serving the objective of all the ashramas. O proud lady! A wife is said to share half in whatever beneficial acts a person undertakes. Entrusting all his own burdens over to her, a man can roam around, freed of all anxiety. Seeking refuge with the wife, one can conquer the enemies that are the senses. Those in other ashramas find them extremely difficult to vanquish. We can vanquish them easily, like the lord of a fort driving away bandits. O mistress of the house! It is impossible for us to obtain all the kinds of powers you possess, in this life and other lives. Nor can others who appreciate your qualities. Therefore, I will indeed satisfy your desire and give you offspring. However, so that I am not reproached, you must wait for the right muhurta. This is a terrible time. Everything is horrible and fearful to look at. The bhutas, the companions of the lord of the bhutas, are wandering around. O virtuous one! This is evening. The illustrious creator of bhutas and king of the bhutas, [961] is travelling around on his bull, surrounded in all directions by bhutas who are his attendants. Your husband's

younger brother, the god with the three eyes, [962] is looking at us. [963] His pure and golden body is completely covered with ashes. His shining mass of matted hair is dishevelled, tawny because duststorms in cremation grounds have covered him with smoke. In this world, there is no one who is his relative. But there is no one who is not a relative either. He does not favour anyone, nor does he reprimand anyone. We follow the vow of serving at his feet, respectfully worship him and enjoy his leftover food. [964] Learned ones who desire to cast away the veil of ignorance chant praises about his unblemished conduct. There is no one who is his equal or his superior. He is the destination of virtuous ones, but has adopted the conduct of a pishacha. He finds delight in his own atman. However, extremely unfortunate ones do not know the reason behind this conduct and laugh at him. They adorn themselves with garments, garlands, ornaments and unguents, while he is immersed in his own atman and eats the food of dogs. Brahma and the others observe the ordinances set by him. He is the cause behind this universe and maya. Those who follow the conduct of pishachas follow his commands. The wonderful conduct of the lord is mysterious." Though her husband educated her in this way, her senses were agitated by Manmatha. [965] Without any sense of shame, like a prostitute, she seized the brahmana rishi's garments. He got to know that his wife was obstinately going to perform the perverse act. Having bowed down to destiny, in a secluded place, he lay down with her. After this, he touched water and controlled his speech and his breath of life. He meditated and chanted hymns about the pure brahman, the eternal light. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Diti became ashamed of the perverse act. She approached the brahmana rishi. With her face lowered, she spoke to him. Diti said, "O brahmana! May the embryo not be killed by the bull among the bhutas, Rudra. He is the lord of all creatures and I have committed an offence against him. I bow down to the great Rudra. He is the fierce god who fulfils all desires. I bow down to Shiva. In his rage, he exerts the rod of punishment. May he cast aside that rod of punishment. May my sister's illustrious husband be pleased and show me his favours. [966] He is the god who is Sati's husband. Even hunters show compassion towards women." Hoping for the welfare of her own offspring in

the world, she was trembling. Having completed the evening rites, Prajapati spoke to his wife. Kashyapa said, "Your atman was polluted. There was a taint due to the wrong muhurta. You disobeyed my command and you disregarded the gods. O unfortunate one! You will therefore have two unfortunate sons who will be the worst among those who have been produced from wombs. O insolent lady! They will repeatedly make the three worlds and their guardians shriek. Creatures will be slaughtered and innocent ones will be distressed. Women will be abducted and great-souls will be enraged. The illustrious one, the creator of the worlds, the lord of the universe, will be enraged. He will then descend and slay them, just as the wielder of the weapon with one hundred joints [967] shatters a mountain." Diti replied, "O lord! I desire that my sons should be killed by the generous and illustrious one himself, wielding the weapon with the excellent nave [968] himself. May they not be slain by angry brahmanas. If a person causes fear to beings and is burnt down by the rod of punishment exerted by brahmanas, the residents of hell do not show him any compassion, nor does the species into which he happens to be born." Kashyapa said, "You are grieving and repenting over what you have done, having carefully thought about it. You have now affectionately shown your respect towards the illustrious one, [969] Bhava and me. Therefore, a son born from your two sons will be revered by virtuous ones. They will chant about his pure fame and his glory will be like that of the illustrious one. Just as inferior gold is purified, virtuous ones will follow his good conduct and purify themselves, such as by not engaging in enmity. Everyone in the universe will be pleased with him, since the illustrious one will be himself pleased with him. He will use the intelligence in his atman to be devoted to no one else. He will be extremely fortunate and great-souled. He will be great in his sentiments and will be the greatest of the great. Through his increased devotion, when he gives up this life, he will enter Vaikuntha and find bliss there. He will not be lustful. He will be a store of good conduct and a store of qualities. He will be happy when others are happy and miserable when others are miserable. He will have no enemies in this world and he will be the reliever of all sorrows. He will be like the king of the stars, [970] relieving the heat of the summer. Both inside him

and outside him, he will see the unblemished lotus-eyed one, who assumes the form desired by his own devotees. Your grandson will see the lord's ornamented form, the one that delights Shri, with his form adorned by dazzling earrings." Hearing that her grandson would be devoted to the illustrious one, Diti was extremely delighted. She was also extremely happy that both her sons would be killed by Krishna.'"'

Chapter 3(15)

"'Maitreya said, 'Diti was anxious about the energy of others and suspected that the gods might cause suffering. [971] Therefore, she bore Prajapati's seed for one hundred years. Because of this, [972] light disappeared from the worlds and darkness enveloped the directions. The guardians of the worlds lost their energy. They went and reported this to the creator of the universe. The gods said, "O lord! You know about this darkness. This is causing us great agitation. Your progress is not impeded by time and there is nothing that is not known to an illustrious one like you. O god of the gods! O creator of the universe! O supreme jewel among the protectors of the universe! You know about the thoughts of creatures who have come before us and will come after us. We bow down before you. Knowledge is your valour. You have obtained your body through maya. You have accepted the guna [973] for the sake of differentiation. Your origin is from the one who is not manifest. We bow down before you. There are those who do not deviate and meditate on you, the source of everything. Cause and effect and the superior worlds are interwoven into your atman. There are those who have ripened themselves through yoga and have conquered their breaths of life, their senses and their atmans. They have obtained your favours and are never vanquished. Just as a cow is tethered with a rope, all the subjects are bound to your words. [974] You are foremost among the ones who obtain a share in sacrifices. We bow down before you. O lord! You are the one who ensures good fortune. Because of the darkness, all the rites have ceased. We are afflicted and you should glance towards us, the unfortunate ones. O god!

This is because of Diti's foetus, with the energy of the seed deposited by Kashyapa. Like a fire into which kindling has been offered, it is growing and enveloping the directions with darkness." O mighty-armed one! The illustrious one, who can be approached through the use of words, the one who created himself, smiled. He replied in gentle words.

"""Brahma said, "Sanaka and the others were my sons through my mental powers and were born before you. Without any desires, they travel through the sky and go to all the worlds and the residents there. They once went to Vaikuntha, where the illustrious one with the unblemished atman resides. All the worlds revere Vaikuntha. All the people who reside in Vaikuntha have a form like Vaikuntha. [975] They are not driven by any material aspirations, but worship Hari because of dharma. The original and illustrious Purusha is there and he can be approached through the use of words. He accepts the pure form of sattva and the foremost confers happiness on us, his devotees. There is a grove named Naishreya [976] there. It has trees that yield all the objects of desire. In every season, it is radiant and prosperous. It is like the embodied form of emancipation. With their women, the residents always roam around in vimanas. Devoid of everything inauspicious, they chant praises of their lord. There are fragrant and blossoming *madhavi* [977] flowers in the water. The breeze wafts this scent along and tries to distract their concentration. There are the loud calls of pigeons, cuckoos, cranes, *chakravaka*s, gallinules, swans, parrots, partridges and peacocks. These cease only when the lord of the bees loudly chants Hari's account. There are trees like *mandara, kunda, kuraba, utpala, champaka, arna, punnaga, naga, bakula, ambuja* and parijata. [978] However, because of the austerities she [979] performed, the extremely good-minded one revers her a lot and is satisfied with the fragrance of a garland of tulasi leaves. In Hari's abode, those who bow down to him can see many vimanas made out of lapis lazuli, emeralds and gold. There are women with large hips and beautiful smiles on their faces. However, despite their allurements, they cannot stimulate desire in those whose atmans are in Krishna. Their forms are as beautiful as that of Shri and anklets tinkle on their lotus feet. Free from all sins, they play with lotuses in Hari's abode and seem to be sweeping the walls, which

are seen to be made out of crystal, encrusted with gold. They take extreme care to obtain his favours. The banks of the lakes are made out of coral. The sparkling water is like amrita. Surrounded by her servants, in her own grove, Shri worships her lord with tulasi leaves. One can see her face, with beautiful hair and a raised nose. O dear ones! It is as if she is being kissed by the illustrious one. There are people who listen to compositions and renderings about other subjects. [980] These are perverse accounts and destroy the intelligence. They cannot approach the place where the destroyer of sins resides. Men who listen to these are robbed of their fortune and the essence of truth. Without any refuge, they are flung into a darkness [981] and destroyed. Birth as humans is desired even by us, because one can then obtain true knowledge, while following dharma. However, after this, if one does not worship the illustrious one through rites, one is confounded and enveloped in a pervasive maya. There are those who follow the foremost one. Through their self-restraint and conduct, they keep Yama away and aspire to reach a place that is above that of gods like us. [982] Lovingly, they converse with each other about the great glories of the lord. They are in ecstasy and tears flow from their eyes. On all their limbs, their body hair stands up. Through their yoga and the strength of their maya, the sages [983] reached Vaikuntha, a place that they had not reached earlier. They were delighted to reach the abode of the preceptor of the universe, a place worshipped by the worlds. It was divine and wonderful, illuminated by the vimanas of the learned ones. Without being attracted, the sages passed through six decorated chambers and reached the seventh. They saw a pair of gods there. They were equal in age and wielded clubs. They were attired in beautiful garments and the upper parts of their bodies were ornamented with bracelets, earrings and diadems. Garlands of wild flowers hung around their necks, spread in between their four blue arms, and intoxicated bees hovered around. There were arched eyebrows on their faces. Their nostrils were wide and their eyes were red. They looked at them, as if their minds were agitated. Without asking these two doorkeepers, the sages entered. As before, in front of them, they saw doors made out of diamonds everywhere. Without any distinction, these sages roamed around as they willed. Since they were without

any sense of fear, they were not obstructed. [984] The four Kumaras were naked. Though aged, they seemed to be only five years old and had grasped the truth about the atman. The doorkeepers laughed because of their strength and did what they should not have done, since it was against good conduct. Acting contrary to the wishes of the illustrious one, they used their canes to obstruct them. While the gods looked on, they were thus restrained by Hari's two doorkeepers, though they should have been respected. In their eagerness to see their beloved well-wisher, the eyes of the sages were suddenly agitated by rage, the younger brother of lust. They said, 'Who are you? You have obtained this position by having served the illustrious one earlier. Though you dwell in a place meant for the followers of dharma, there is a discordant trait in your natures. The tranquil Purusha is beyond all enmity. Other than yourselves, who can suspect anything like deceit? Here, there is no difference between the illustrious one and everything else. Learned ones see their atmans in his atman, like a small bit of space [985] inside larger space. We can see that you possess the marks of gods. [986] That is the reason a fear has arisen in you and you can discern differences within the stomach. [987] Therefore, we need to do something for the supreme lord of Vaikuntha and bring you benefit too. Let us consider what can be done for those like you, who are wicked in intelligence. Since you see differences inside a place like this, go to a different world, where the three evil enemies [988] exist.' Hari's attendants were extremely terrified. They understood the terrible purport of the words that had been spoken in the form of a brahmana's curse and this could not be countered through weapons. Extremely distressed, they prostrated themselves and seized their feet. 'O illustrious ones! Let the punishment be inflicted on wicked ones like us. It will absolve us of any sins that remain because we have disregarded the god. We are repentant. As we leave this place and go to the regions below, let us not be confounded, so that we no longer remember the illustrious one.' At that time, the illustrious Aravindanabha [989] got to know that his attendants had committed a transgression against noble and virtuous ones. Paramahamsas and great sages seek out his feet and with Shri, he used these to go to the spot. They saw him advance, with his own attendants and objects. He is the

object of vision and those who are fortunate can see him in their meditations. His white umbrella was like the moon. The two whisks were as beautiful as swans and led to an auspicious and gentle breeze that made drops of water that were like pearl drops from the ends of the umbrella. The one with the beautiful face is the source of all favours and is the desired refuge. His affectionate glance expands and touches every heart. Shri was radiant on his blue and broad chest and was like jewel worn on the head, extending good fortune throughout the illustrious one's abode. There was a radiant girdle over the yellow garment around his broad hips. He wore a garland of white flowers and bees hummed around it. There were beautiful bracelets around his wrists and one of his hands was placed on the shoulder of Vinata's son. [990] The other hand twirled a white lotus. His cheeks, which deserved to be decorated, were ornamented with earrings in the shape of makaras and their brilliance surpassed that of lightning. Because of his prominent nose, his face was beautiful. There were gems on his diadem. The Koustubha jewel was around his neck and a beautiful and expensive necklace also hung between his four thick arms. The goddess of fortune possessed a beauty to be proud of. However, his devotees used their intelligence to decide that his beauty surpassed that of hers. For the sake of me, Bhava and you, [991] he assumed a form that deserved to be worshipped. They were not satisfied and kept looking at him. From the toes of the lotus feet of the lotus-eyed one, the fragrant air carried the smell of tulasi leaves and this entered through their noses, agitating their minds and bodies, though their minds were attached to the one without decay. [992] The lord's face was as beautiful as the inside of a blue lotus. The smile on his charming lips was like a kunda flower. They glanced at him and obtained his benedictions. They glanced again at his two lotus feet, with red nails that were like rubies, and meditated on them. In this world, men use the path of yoga to search him out as a destination. As a result of meditation, he shows his extremely revered human form, which is delightful to the eyes and is eternally praised. However, this is only accessible to a person who possesses the eight kinds of siddhis. The Kumaras said, 'You are in the hearts of evil-souled ones, but are not visible to them. O infinite one! However, we have obtained you today, in

front of our eyes. Our father, [993] born from you, described your mysteries to us. This entered our hearts through our eyes and we used our intelligence to grasp it. O illustrious one! We know you as the truth, as the paramatman. You are the one who uses sattva to create affection in those who have obtained your mercy and have comprehended you through firm bhakti yoga. Sages who have severed the bonds of attachment know you in their hearts. There are those who have a great desire for emancipation. They obtain your favours, not to speak of those who are scared of the knitting of your eyebrows and have given themselves up to other things. [994] O dear one! They have taken shelter before your lotus feet and seek out accounts about your deeds. They are experts in savouring these glories, which are like tirthas. Because of our sinful deeds, even if we find ourselves in hell, we desire that, like black bees, our minds should continue to find delight in your lotus feet. May our words be like tulasi leaves and become beautified by your lotus feet. Let a multitude of your qualities be chanted and fill our ears. You have shown us this greatly revered form. O lord! We have obtained satisfaction at having been able to see this form, which is impossible for those who have not controlled themselves to see. Therefore, we offer our worship to this illustrious form. The illustrious one has been seen by us.’”””’

Chapter 3(16)

““““Brahma said, “The sages, who followed the dharma of yoga, praised him in this way. The lord, whose abode is in Vaikuntha, greeted them and said the following.

““‘The illustrious one said, “These two attendants of mine are Jaya and Vijaya. They have slighted me and have also committed a great offence against you. They have also disregarded the gods. O sages! Therefore, the punishment you have imposed on them has my approval. Since brahmanas are supreme divinities for me, I seek your pardon. I think that the offence caused to you by these men is like an offence caused to you by me. When a servant commits a crime, people take the name of the master and his reputa-

tion suffers because of this blame, like disease affecting the skin. I am Vaikuntha. Hearing about my fame is like immersion in unblemished amrita. It instantly purifies the universe, even a *svapacha*. [995] I have obtained the fame of being an excellent tirtha from people like you. If my own arm acts against you, I will have no hesitation in severing it. It is because I serve you that the dust on my lotus feet has become purified and can instantly cleanse all sin. That is how I have obtained good conduct. That is the reason Shri does not leave me, even though I am not attached to her. Everyone else observes vows to obtain the favour of her glances. I do not relish the oblations offered by those who sacrifice into the sacrificial fire and the clarified butter mixed with food, as much as I relish a brahmana offering me the fruits of his action, having satisfied himself after eating the food. I alone bear the complete and unobstructed power of my yoga maya, but I bear the pure dust of their [996] feet on my diadem. The water that has washed their feet instantly purifies the worlds, including the one who wears the moon. [997] Who will not tolerate brahmanas? The best brahmanas, milk-yielding cows and other creatures who have not obtained a refuge are no different from me. It is only the ignorant who perceive a difference. Those who perceive such a difference from me have impaired vision. They will be torn apart by the messengers of the supervisor of punishments. [998] They are like angry vultures and their rage is like that of serpents. Even if brahmanas speak harshly, there are those who use their intelligence to worship them and satisfy them with joyous hearts, their faces like lotuses that are wet with the nectar of smiles. Using loving and affectionate words, they address them as one would speak to a son and praise and pacify them. I am won over by such people. Not knowing their own master's intentions, these two have offended you and are headed downwards. Show me your favours so that after going through this, they should immediately return to my presence. Let it be such that these two servants are not exiled for a long time."'

"'"'Brahma continued, "He spoke in this way to the noble rishis, as if the goddess Sarasvati was in the speech. [999] The sages were tainted by anger. Even though they heard these words, they were not satisfied. They heard those well-composed words attentively. They were deep in import and not

easy to comprehend. They immersed themselves in these deep and fathomless words. However, they did not understand what he wished to do. Through his yoga maya, Parameshthi's greatness had been revealed to them. The brahmanas were delighted and their body hair stood up. They joined their hands in salutation and said, 'O illustrious one! O god! We do not know what you desire. You are supreme and you have spoken as if we have done you a favour. O lord! You have said that brahmanas are supreme divinities and that brahmanas are also superior to you. O god! O illustrious one! But you yourself are the divinity for both gods and brahmanas. Eternal dharma flows from you and is protected by your forms. In our view, you are not subject to change. You are mysterious and supreme dharma. It is through your favours that yogis withdraw from action and conquer death. It is not possible for anyone else to show you favours. Others desire the occasional favours of the goddess of prosperity and apply the dust of her feet on their heads. The king of bees has a place on the garland of fresh tulasi leaves at your feet and she wishes to be in that fortunate position. She is pure and is devoted to you in conduct. But you are not as attached to her as you are to your devotees. How can you be purified by the dust on the path travelled by brahmanas, or how can you be purified by the sign of shrivatsa? You yourself are the reservoir of everything that is excellent. O illustrious one! O Triyuga! [1000] You yourself are the feet of dharma in the three yugas. For the sake of gods and brahmanas, you protect everything that is mobile and immobile. Indeed, using sattva, you have destroyed and driven away rajas and tamas. Yours is the body that confers boons on us. O best protector! O one who is worshipped! O god! If you do not protect the excellent lineages of the brahmanas, your auspicious path will be destroyed. People accept the behaviour of the best as a yardstick. O store of sattva! You do not desire or like the idea of the best being destroyed. For the welfare of people, you use your powers to destroy the enemy. You are the lord of the three worlds. You are the protector of the universe. Your energy is not diminished because you are bowing down. You are doing this because it pleases you. O lord! Whatever punishment you inflict on these two is approved by us. Without any duplicity, we will accept whatever births you de-

termine for them. Impose a suitable punishment on us, since we have inflicted a curse on those two innocent ones.' The illustrious one replied, 'They will instantly obtain a birth that is inferior to that of gods. However much their anger increases, they will be firmly bound to meditation through yoga. They will then soon return to my presence. O brahmanas! I was the reason behind the curse you inflicted on them.' Thus, the sages saw Vaikuntha, who brought delight to the eyes, in his self-resplendent abode of Vaikuntha. They circumambulated the illustrious one, bowed down before him and took his leave. Full of joy, they returned, praising the Vaishnava glory. The illustrious one told his servants, 'Depart. Do not be frightened. Find happiness. Though I am capable of countering the energy of brahmanas, this has my approval and I do not wish to do so. This was ordained earlier, when Rama [1001] was enraged. On an earlier occasion, when I was resting, she wished to enter and you prevented her at the gate. Because of rage, you will immerse yourselves in yoga and tide over the offence of having disrespected brahmanas. Within a very short period of time, you will again return to my presence.' Instructing the doorkeepers in this way, the illustrious one entered his own abode, which was ornamented with arrays of vimanas and was marked everywhere with signs of great prosperity. Because of the curse of brahmanas, extremely difficult to resist, those two bulls among divinities were dislodged from Hari's world. They were deprived of their prosperity and lost their happiness. O sons! As they were falling down from Vaikuntha's abode, great sounds of lamentation arose from those who were in those vimanas. Hari's two excellent attendants have now obtained Kashyapa's powerful seed and have entered Diti's womb. You are now suffering because of the energy of those twin asuras and this has certainly agitated your energy. However, this has been ordained by the illustrious one. He is the reason behind the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe. Even lords of yoga also find it impossible to cross his yoga maya. The illustrious one, the lord of the three worlds, will arrange for our welfare. That being the case, what purpose will be served by our thinking about the matter?"'''''

Chapter 3(17)

“‘Maitreya said, ‘Having heard about the reason recited by the self-born one, all the residents of heaven were freed of their fear and returned to heaven. Because of what her husband had foretold, Diti was scared. After a full one hundred years were over, the virtuous one gave birth to twin sons. The earth, with its mountains, trembled. All the directions blazed. Meteors and thunder showered down. Comets and evil portents manifested themselves. A wind that was extremely harsh to the touch started to blow, repeatedly making a tumultuous noise. Large trees were uprooted and the whirlwinds raised banners of dust. There were masses of clouds and the lightning was like laughter. The stellar bodies disappeared. Darkness enveloped the sky and not a single spot could be distinguished. The ocean was distressed and shrieked, with lofty waves and its inside agitated. Waterbodies and rivers were also agitated and lotuses dried up. There were repeated bouts of mist. Rahu attacked the moon and the sun. There was thunder and sounds like that of clattering chariots emerging from inside caves. Inside the villages, female jackals vomited terrible fire from their mouths and howled in hideous and inauspicious tones, accompanied by owls and male jackals. Raising up their heads, here and there, dogs barked in many kinds of ways. They seemed to sometimes sing and sometimes weep. O Kshatta! Herds of maddened donkeys rushed around wildly, braying harshly and striking the ground with their hooves. Birds were terrified by the donkeys. They shrieked and flew out of their nests. Domestic and wild animals released urine and excrement. Cows were terrified and yielded blood instead of milk. The clouds showered down pus. The images of the gods wept. Though there was no wind, the trees were uprooted. Auspicious planets were surpassed by the others. [1002] The stellar bodies blazed, followed retrograde paths and fought with each other. The subjects witnessed these great and ominous portents. With the exception of Brahma’s sons, they did not know about the truth. They were frightened and thought that the time for the universe to be submerged had arrived. Those two original daityas quickly manifested their

virility. Their bodies were as hard as stone and they grew up, resembling large mountains. They stood there and the crests of their golden diadems touched the sky. They blocked the directions with arms decorated with shining armlets. At every step, their feet made the earth tremble. The excellent girdles around their waists surpassed the sun. Prajapati [1003] gave them names. The first son born from his body was Hiranyakashipu. People knew the elder son as Hiranyaksha. [1004] Because of Brahma's boon, Hiranyakashipu did not fear death from anyone. He used his arms to subjugate the three worlds and their guardians. He was arrogant. Hiranyaksha was loved by his younger brother, who always did what brought him pleasure. With a club in his hand, he [1005] went to heaven, looking for an opportunity to fight. They [1006] saw him, irresistible in his speed. Golden anklets tinkled around his feet. He was adorned with a *vaijayanti* garland [1007] and the huge club rested on his shoulder. Because of the boon, he could not be countered and was proud of his physical and mental prowess, without any fear. On seeing him, the gods were terrified and hid themselves, like scared snakes before Tarkshya. [1008] When he saw that Indra and the large number of gods had gone into hiding because of his great prowess, the intoxicated king of the daityas roared loudly. He returned and roared in a terrible voice. Wishing to play, the great being immersed himself in the ocean, like a crazy elephant. When he entered there, Varuna's soldiers, the aquatic creatures, became distressed. Though they were not struck by him, they were scared because of his radiance and suffering, fled a long distance away. O son! The immensely strong one spent many years there, roaming amidst the mighty waves repeatedly made turbulent by the wind of his breathing. He beat these down with his iron club. He then reached Vibhavari, the city of Prachetas. [1009] Having reached Prachetas, lord of the large number of aquatic creatures and the protector of the world of the asuras, he smiled. Like an inferior person indulging in jest, he bowed down and said, "O great king! Grant me a fight. You are the guardian of the world. You are an emperor and your fame is extensive. You are the one who takes away the valour of brave and arrogant ones who consider themselves to be invincible. You have conquered all the worlds, with the daityas and the danavas. O lord! Earlier, you have there-

after performed a royal sacrifice." The illustrious lord of the waters was thus bitterly spoken to by an insolent enemy who mocked him. Using his intelligence, he pacified his rising rage and replied, 'O dear one! I am old and resort to tranquility now. O bull among asuras! I do not see anyone other than the ancient Purusha who can fight with you and give you satisfaction. You are accomplished in the ways of fighting. Learned ones like you also praise him. When you reach that brave one, you will be swiftly robbed of your pride. You will lie down on a bed meant for heroes, surrounded by dogs. Exhibiting his favours to the virtuous and depending on his wishes, he adopts many kinds of forms to pacify wicked ones like you.'"'

Chapter 3(18)

"'Maitreya said, 'He heard what the lord of the waters had said. But the immensely proud and extremely haughty one paid little heed to these words. O dear one! He got to know from Narada where Hari was. [1010] Therefore, he quickly entered rasatala. He saw the victorious one there, holding up the earth. The earth was being raised up on the tips of the tusks. His own radiance was diminished by his [1011] reddish eyes. He laughed, "Aha! This is a *vanagochara* animal. [1012] O ignorant one! Let go of the earth and come to me. The creator of the universe has granted the residents of the nether regions to us. While I look on, you cannot go away safely with this. [1013] O worst among the gods! You have assumed the form of a boar. Have our enemies nurtured you? Do you use your maya to remain invisible and kill asuras? O one who is limited in virility! You are one who uses the strength of yoga maya. O foolish one! After taking care of you, I will wipe away the sorrow of my well-wishers. You will lie down, with your head shattered by my club. My arms will release it towards you. The gods and the rishis offer you oblations. Even if they remain, they will no longer have their foundation." He was struck by the words of the enemy, which were like javelins. He saw that the earth, balanced on the tips of his tusks, was frightened. Tolerating the pain, he arose from the water, like a male ele-

phant with a female elephant that has been seized by a crocodile. As he emerged from the water, Hiranyakesha [1014] followed him, like an elephant pursued by a crocodile. With horrible teeth and a voice like thunder, he said, "Have you no shame? What can shame a wicked and reprimanded person?" He raised the earth out of the water and laid it down, within his range of vision, investing it with his own spirit. He was praised by the creator of the universe [1015] and the satisfied gods showered down flowers on him, while the enemy still looked on. He was followed closely at the rear by the one who was adorned with golden ornaments, wearing golden and colourful armour and wielding the giant club. He [1016] continued to continuously strike him with harsh words that pierced the inner organs.

"""The illustrious one pretended to be angry. He laughed at him and said, "It is true that we are vanagochara animals. We are searching for dogs like you. Brave ones are free of the bondage of death. O fortunate one! They pay no attention to your self-praise. We are taking away what belongs to the residents of the nether regions. We are shameless and have been driven away by your club. Nevertheless, somehow or the other, I have to remain on the field of battle. Having generated enmity with a powerful one, where can we possibly go? You are indeed the lord of leaders of foot soldiers. Quickly take steps to defeat us. Having shown us our proper place, wipe away the tears of your own. If a person does not accomplish his pledge, he is not fit to obtain a place in an assembly." Thus abused and ridiculed by the illustrious one, who seemed to be angry, he became filled with rage, like a king of snakes that was being toyed with. The rage led to his sighing agitatedly and his senses were in a whirl. The daitya quickly rushed forward and struck Hari with the club. With force, the enemy hurled the club towards his chest. But just as one immersed in yoga avoids death, the illustrious one stepped aside and avoided this. Enraged, Hari rushed forward, displaying his rage by biting his lips. However, he seized his club again and started to whirl it around repeatedly. O amiable one! Using his club, the lord struck the enemy on his right eyebrow. But he was accomplished in fighting with clubs and struck him back. In this way, Haryaksha [1017] and he used heavy clubs to fight against each other. Extremely angry and desiring victory, they struck

each other. As they rivalled each, their bodies were struck by the clubs. The smell of the blood that flowed increased their anger even more. Desiring victory, they roamed around in different modes of movement. It seemed as if two bulls were fighting for the sake of a cow. O Kouravya! The great-souled one, whose limbs are sacrifices, had used maya to assume the form of a boar. He and the enemy, the daitya, fought for the sake of the earth. Desiring to see this, the one who was his own ruler [1018] arrived, surrounded by the rishis. The daitya was full of power and devoid of fear. He fought back and his great valour was irresistible. On seeing this, the illustrious one, who was the leader of thousands, [1019] addressed Narayana, in his form of the original boar. Brahma said, 'O god! He causes offence to gods, brahmanas, Surabhi's children [1020] and innocent creatures who seek the refuge of your feet. He causes fear and his conduct is evil. This asura has obtained a boon from me. Searching for someone to fight with, he roams around the world and is like a thorn. He knows the use of maya, insolent, unrestrained and worst among the wicked. O god! Do not play with him, like a child with a snake that has presented itself. O god! O Achutya! Before his own terrible time arrives and he resorts to his own maya, kill this evil one. O lord! This terrible evening is approaching. O one who is everyone's atman! Ensure victory for the gods. This is the auspicious conjunction known as Abhijit and it lasts for two muhurtas. [1021] For the welfare of your well-wishers, swiftly destroy this invincible one. With his death ordained, it is good fortune that he has himself come before you. Use your valour to slay him in the battle and bring about the peace of the worlds.'"'

Chapter 3(19)

"Maitreya said, 'He heard Virinchi's words, which were free from guile and like amrita. Full of affection, he glanced at the beloved one and accepted his words. The lord who was born from the nostrils [1022] leapt up towards the enemy who was wandering around fearlessly in front of him. He struck the asura's jaw with his club. An extraordinary event occurred. He struck back with his own club and the illustrious one's club fell down from his hand, whirling in energy. He thus obtained an opportunity to strike back. However, following the dharma of fighting, he did not strike someone who was without a weapon and Vishvaksena was enraged. As the lord's club was struck down in this way, great sounds of lamentation arose. However, he applauded this following of dharma and remembered the weapon with the excellent nave. He eagerly used the chakra and toyed with Diti's wicked son, who had actually been chief of his own attendants. Wonderful words were spoken by the ignorant ones who were in the sky. [1023] "May you be safe. May you kill him." The lotus-eyed one was standing in front of him, holding the chakra. Hearing this, he looked towards him, his senses full of intolerance. He bit his own lips in rage and sighed. He bared his terrible teeth and glanced at him, as if he would burn him down in rage. He leapt up and used his own club to strike Hari with the force of the wind, screaming, "You have been killed." O virtuous one! While the enemy looked on, the illustrious one, the boar who is the sacrifice, playfully deflected the bow with his left foot. He said, "Come. Since you desire to be victorious, pick up your weapon and try again." Thus addressed, he struck again and roared extremely loudly. The illustrious one saw that the club was descending. However, standing firmly, he seized it when it arrived, like Garuda seizing a female serpent. The great asura raged that his own virility had been countered and that he had been disrespected. Though the club was offered to him by Hari, since it had lost its brilliance, he did not wish to accept it. He seized a blazing trident, which wished to greedily envelope

everything in its flames and hurled it towards the one who had assumed and was wandering around in this form for the sake of sacrifices and brahmanas. The daitya, the great fighter, hurled it with all his strength and it blazed through the sky, increasingly luminescent. However, he severed it with the sharp-edged chakra, just as Indra had dislodged Tarkshya's feather. [1024] When his own trident was shattered into many parts by his enemy, Hari, the asura became extremely angry. He advanced and using his fist, struck a hard blow on his broad chest, Lakshmi's abode. Having struck, he roared and vanished. O Kshatta! Struck in this way, the illustrious original boar did not tremble even slightly. It was as if an elephant had been struck with a garland. He [1025] invoked many kinds of maya against Hari, the lord of yoga maya. On seeing this, all the subjects were terrified and thought that the destruction of everything was near. Fierce winds started to blow and shrouded everything in darkness and dust. Stones fell down in every direction, as if they had been hurled from catapults. In the firmament, the radiance of the stellar bodies was destroyed, covered by masses of clouds tinged with thunder and lightning. Pus, hair, blood, excrement, urine and bones showered down repeatedly. O unblemished one! The mountains were seen to discharge many kinds of weapons. There were naked yatudhana women with dishevelled hair, wielding spears. Many yakshas, rakshasas, foot soldiers, riders on horses, chariots and elephants and assassins uttered violent and murderous cries. To destroy the maya manifested by the asura, the illustrious one with three feet [1026] invoked and used his beloved sudarshana weapon. There was a sudden trembling in Diti's heart as she remembered the words spoken by her husband. Blood oozed out of her breasts. With his own maya destroyed, he tried to approach Keshava again. He tried to angrily grasp him in his arms, but he saw that he remained outside the clasp. He now started to strike him with fists that were as hard as the vajra. But Adhokshaja struck him at the root of his ear with his hand, like the lord of the Maruts striking Tvashta's son. [1027] The conqueror of the universe struck him casually. However, his body was whirled around and his eyeballs fell out of their sockets. His arms, feet and head were shattered and he fell down, like a gigantic tree uprooted by the wind. He lay down on the ground, but his

radiance did not fade. He bit his lips with his terrible teeth. Brahma and the others arrived and saw him. They said, 'Wonderful. Who can obtain such a wonderful death? Alone, he is the one on whom yogis meditate. Desiring liberation from the linga sharira, they meditate on him. He is the one who has struck the bull among the daityas with his foot. He gave up his life while he glanced towards his [1028] face. These two attendants obtained this wicked end because of the curse. After some more births, they will again regain their status. We bow down to you. We bow down to you, the one who enjoys all the sacrifices. For the sake of preservation, you assume this pure form of sattva. It is good fortune that the one who made the universe suffer has been slain. O lord! We are devoted to your feet and have found happiness.' Hiranyaksha's valour was impossible to withstand. However, Hari, the original boar, killed him in this way. Praised by the one who is seated on the lotus [1029] and others, he returned to his own world, where there are uninterrupted festivities. O excellent friend! I have explained to you Hari's activities as the first avatara. Hiranyaksha was great in his valour. But in a great battle, he toyed with him and killed him.'"'

Suta said, 'O brahmana! [1030] Thus, Kshatta, the great devotee, heard about the illustrious one's account from Kousharava and was supremely delighted. There are others, pious and famous devotees, and one rejoices on hearing about their deeds, not speak of the one who bears the mark of the shrivatsa. When the Indra among elephants was seized by a crocodile, the female elephants shrieked and meditated on his lotus feet. He immediately freed it from its hardship. Which grateful person will not serve the one who can be easily approached by upright men who seek him as their only refuge? Wicked people find it impossible to approach him. To bring about the death of Hiranyaksha, in his pastimes, he performed the extraordinary act of assuming the form of a boar. O brahmanas! If one hears, chants or finds delight in this account, one is instantly liberated, even if one has committed the sin of killing a brahmana. This pure and sacred account brings great merit. It confers wealth, fame, a long life and welfare. In the field of battle, it increases the valour of the breath of life and the senses. O dear one! Those who hear it obtain Narayana as the destination.'

Chapter 3(20)

Shounaka asked, 'O Suta! After having established himself on earth, what did Svayambhuva Manu do, to establish doors and paths [1031] for those who would be born later? The immensely fortunate Kshatta was a well-wisher who was extremely devoted to Krishna. He abandoned his elder brother because he and his sons committed offences against Krishna. He was born from Dvaipayana's body and was not inferior to him in greatness. With all his soul, he sought refuge with Krishna and with those who followed him. Having cleansed himself by visiting the tirthas, what did he ask Maitreya, supreme among those who know the truth, after approaching him when he was seated in Kushavarta? [1032] O Suta! They must have started to converse about unblemished accounts that destroy sins, like the waters of the Ganga, which seeks refuge with Hari's lotus feet. O fortunate one! Recount those pervasive deeds to us. They are worthy of recounting. Hari's pastimes are like amrita and no one who possesses the taste will be satisfied from drinking this in.'

In Naimisha, Ugrashrava was thus asked by the rishis. His mind was immersed in the atman of the illustrious one and he told them, 'Listen.'

Suta said, 'He heard how Hari had used his own maya to assume the form of a boar and raise the earth up from rasatala and about how he had casually toyed with Hiranyaksha and killed him. Delighted, the descendant of the Bharata lineage spoke to the sage.

'Vidura said, "O brahmana! You know about the progress of the one who is not manifest. After creating the Prajapatis, so as to ensure the creation of subjects, what did the lord of Prajapatis [1033] do? Tell us. Commanded by Brahma, how did brahmanas like Marichi and Svayambhuva Manu indulge in creation? Did they create with their wives or were their actions independent? Did they [1034] collectively engage in the action of creation?"

'Maitreya replied, "From the three gunas, Mahat was created through incomprehensible destiny, Purusha and time, agitated by the illustrious one. [1035] Rajas dominated Mahat and ahamkara was created from Mahat. It was

of three types. [1036] From this was created space and the other elements and so on, in groups of five. [1037] However, acting as independent entities, they were incapable of creating this material world. Through the divine one's yoga, they came together and created that golden egg. The egg was without an atman and lay down in the waters for more than one thousand years. After this, the lord entered it. A lotus that was as radiant as one thousand suns sprouted from his navel. It was the abode of all creatures and Svayambhu, who rules himself, was manifested from this. For the sake of the creation of the universe, so that it might be exactly as it had been earlier, the illustrious one, who was lying down in the waters, made his intelligence enter him. [1038] From his shadow, he first created five kinds of ignorance—tamisra, andhatamisra, tamas, moha and *mahatamas*. However, all of this was full of tamas and he did not like it. Therefore, he gave up his own body, which was in the form of night and was accepted by yakshas and rakshasas. Hunger and thirst result from this. [1039] Afflicted by hunger and thirst, they rushed towards him. Overcome by hunger and thirst, they said, 'Do not save him. Devour him.' The god became anxious and told them, 'Do not eat me. Protect me. O yakshas and rakshas! You have been born from me and are my offspring.' He then created the foremost among the gods, who blazed because of their radiance. When he discarded his resplendence, the gods accepted this resplendence in the form of the day. The god then created those who were not gods [1040] from his hips and these were extremely addicted to intercourse. Since they were excessively addicted, they wished to have intercourse with him. The illustrious one laughed at the shameless asuras. But finding that they were following him, he was enraged and scared. He fled quickly. He went to Hari, the granter of boons and the one with whom the afflicted seek refuge. To show his compassion towards his devotees, he shows himself in a form that is desired by them. 'O paramatman! Save me. You commanded me to create offspring, but these wicked ones have attacked me and wish to have intercourse with me. O lord! Save me. You are the destroyer of hardships and you are the only one who can remove the difficulties of the worlds. You are the only one who can create difficulties for those who do not seek the refuge of your feet.' Since he knows everyone's

mind, he understood the misery and said, 'Give up your terrible body.' Thus addressed, he cast the body aside. This body assumed the form of the evening. There were tinkling anklets on her lotus feet and her eyes were mad with intoxication. Her hips were covered with an excellent piece of cloth and she wore a shining girdle with bells above this. There was no gap between her high and thick breasts and they touched each other. Her nose and teeth were excellent. Her smile was gentle and she glanced playfully at them. She possessed a mass of dark blue hair and she hid herself in shame. O Dharma! [1041] All the asuras took her to be a woman [1042] and were confused. 'Wonderful! What beauty. What perseverance. What budding youth. She is without desire, but is roaming around amidst us, who are full of desire.' They debated a lot about evening, who was in the form of a woman. Wicked in intelligence, they respectfully asked her, 'Who are you? O one whose thighs are like a plantain tree! Whom do you belong to? O beautiful one! What is the reason behind your coming here? Your beauty is priceless. Why are you tempting unfortunate ones like us? O lady! Whoever you may be, we have had the good fortune of seeing you. While you are playing with a ball, you are agitating the minds of those who are looking at you. O beautiful one! While you are repeatedly bouncing the ball on the ground with the palm of your hand, your lotus feet do not remain in the same place. Your waist is suffering from the weight of your large breasts. Your clear eyes are peaceful and the braid of your hair is excellent.' In this way, the asuras, foolish in their intelligence, took the evening twilight to be a woman and, tempted, seized her. With a deep sense of purpose, the illustrious one [1043] laughed. From inside his own atman, he created large numbers of beautiful gandharvas and asparas. He gave up that beautiful and beloved form of moonlight. Delighted, with Vishvavasu at the forefront, they [1044] accepted this. From his own distracted form, the illustrious one then created bhutas and pishachas. On seeing that they were naked, with dishevelled hair, he closed his eyes. The lord abandoned a body and they seized the creator's body that was in the form of yawning. [1045] This is seen in living beings in the form of sleep, that is, sluggishness of the senses. They [1046] attack those who are defiled and this is said to be the unmada state. Thinking himself to

be full of energy, the illustrious lord Aja created large numbers of Sadhyas and ancestors, while remaining invisible. The ancestors accepted the body from which they themselves had been created. Wise ones offer oblations to Sadhyas and ancestors. While remaining invisible, he created Siddhas and vidyadharas and gave them his wonderful body that is known as *antardhana*. [1047] While looking at his own reflection in the water, the lord admired himself and from this reflection, he created kinnaras and kimpurushas. They assumed the form that Parameshthi cast aside. Hence, at the time of dawn, they come together as couples and sing, praising his deeds. He stretched his body out at full length and lay down, thinking a lot, because the creation was insufficient. Therefore, he cast aside this body. O dear! The hair that dropped from this body became snakes. From the body that was still writhing around were born cruel nagas with large hoods on their thick necks. The self-created one took himself to have been successful in his objective. After this, using his mental powers, the creator of the worlds created Manus. In control of his atman, he then gave his own human body to them. On seeing this, all those who had been created earlier praised Prajapati. 'Wonderful! O creator of the universe! What you have done is a good deed. Since rites have now been established, [1048] all of us will now eat our shares of the offerings.' Full of austerities, knowledge, yoga and meditation, the rishi who was the controller of his senses [1049] created his beloved sons, in the form of the rishis. To each of them, Aja gave a part of his own body, characterized by meditation, yoga, powers, austerities, knowledge and non-attachment."'

Chapter 3(21)

'Vidura said, "O illustrious one! The lineage of Svayambhuva Manu is greatly revered. Tell me about how offspring were generated and multiplied through sexual intercourse. Svayambhuva had two sons, Priyavrata and Uttanapada. They followed dharma and protected the earth, consisting of seven dvipas. [1050] O brahmana! He had a daughter, famous by the name of De-

vahuti. O unblemished one! You told me that she was the wife of Prajapati Kardama. She possessed all the signs of yoga. Through the seed of the great yogi, how many children did she have? I wish to hear this. Tell me. O brahmana! The illustrious Ruchi and Daksha were Brahma's sons. Having obtained Manu's daughters as wives, [1051] how did they have offspring?"

'Maitreya replied, "The illustrious Kardama was commanded by Brahma to have offspring. On the banks of the Sarasvati, he tormented himself through austerities for ten thousand years. Kardama immersed himself in meditation and engaged in the rites of yoga. [1052] He devotedly served Hari, the one who grants boons to those who seek refuge with him. In krita yuga, the illustrious lotus-eyed one was pleased. O Kshatta! He showed him his form of Shabda-Brahma. [1053] He was without any impurities and was as resplendent as the sun. He wore a garland made out of white lotuses and water lilies. His lotus face was beautiful, with soft locks of dark blue hair. His garments were spotless. He wore a diadem and earrings. He playfully held a conch shell, a chakra, a club and a white lotus. His smiles and glances gladdened the heart. His lotus feet were placed on the shoulders of Garuda. Shri was on his chest and the Koustubha gem hung around his neck. He saw him stationed in the sky in this way. Having obtained his desire, he [1054] was delighted and satisfied. He lowered his head and prostrated himself on the ground. He was naturally affectionate. He joined his hands in salutation and prayed.

'"The rishi said, 'O lord of all the stores of sattva! Everything has now been accomplished. My eyes have obtained success and I have seen you. O lord! Across many births, virtuous yogis remain firmly fixed in yoga, developing themselves and hoping to see you. Your lotus feet are like a boat to cross the ocean that is the cycle of life on earth. However, there are those whose intelligence has been deluded by your maya and they only worship them to satisfy their desires. O lord! You satisfy those desires, even if such people happen to be in hell. I also wish to fulfil desire and marry a woman who is like me in conduct, who will be like a cow in my role as a householder. [1055] I have approached your feet, the source of everything, with this perverse desire. You are like a tree that yields all the objects of desire. O

Prajapati! O lord! This entire world is afflicted by desire and is bound down by the ropes that are your words. O eternal and pure one! I am also following the way of the worlds and am rendering the offerings to you. Abandoning the worlds, the ways of the worlds and animals, there are those who seek prosperity under the shadow of your lotus feet. They converse with each other about your qualities. They drink those words, which are like nectar, and extinguish the dharma of bodies. Your wheel rotates around the axis of the eternal brahman. It has thirteen spokes and three hundred and sixty joints. [1056] There are six rims, innumerable leaves and three naves. [1057] The universe whirls around at terrific speed, severing everything. You alone can desire to create the universe and there is no second one who is a controller. O illustrious one! You used your yoga maya to create, preserve and destroy, just as a spider uses its own powers to fashion a web. O lord! This material creation is not what you wish for. You have used your maya to manifest these gross and subtle elements so as to satisfy us. Use your maya to show us your favours. Let the illustrious one's splendid form, with the tulasi, be seen. Using your maya, you have ensured the conduct of the material worlds. You have realized them, but are beyond the enjoyment of that action. You are the one who must constantly be worshipped. Your lotus feet are worthy of being worshipped. You are the one who showers down on those who crave for these insignificant desires.'"

'The rishi said, [1058] "The one with the lotus in his navel was thus sincerely praised. He was beautiful, astride the wings of Suparna. His smiles were full of affection and as he glanced, his eyebrows arched gracefully. He spoke in words that were like amrita.

'"'The illustrious one replied, 'Having known your intentions, I have already arranged the objective for which you followed the rules and worshipped me. O ruler of subjects! If people like you worship me, surrendering themselves and fixing their atmans on me, they are never unsuccessful. The emperor Manu, Prajapati's son, is famous for his auspicious deeds. He lives in Brahmavarta and rules over the entire earth, with its seven oceans. [1059] O brahmana! He is knowledgeable about dharma. With his queen, Shatarupa, the royal sage will come here day after tomorrow, wishing to see

you. His dark-eyed daughter has come of age and possesses good conduct and qualities. O lord! He is looking for a husband for her and will bestow her on you, since you are appropriate. She is the kind of person on whom your mind has been fixed for many years. O brahmana! The king's daughter will soon serve you, as you desire. Through your seed, she will give birth to nine offspring. Through their seeds, the rishis will have offspring through your daughters. You will carry out my instructions properly and your mind will be clean. Surrendering the fruits of all your action to me, as a tirtha, you will obtain me. You will show compassion towards living creatures and grant them freedom from fear. You will realize your atman and the world in my atman. You will see me in your atman. O great sage! Through your seed, a portion of me will be born through your wife Devahuti and I will compose a text about the truth.'" [1060]

'Maitreya said, "When the illustrious one, who had directly manifested himself before the senses, said this, he went to the lake known as Bindusaras, with the Sarasvati encircling it. While he looked on, he [1061] departed, praised by all the lords among the Siddhas, along the path followed by the Siddhas. One could hear the fluttering of the wings of the Indra among the birds chant out beautiful collections of hymns from the Sama Veda. After the pure one had left, the illustrious rishi, Kardama, remained in Bindusaras, waiting for the right time. Manu mounted a chariot that was decorated with plates made out of molten gold. He ascended it with his wife and daughter and roamed around the earth. O excellent archer! On a day that had been appointed by the illustrious one, he arrived at the sage's hermitage, after the sage had completed his vows. Teardrops fell down from the eyes of the illustrious one when he was overcome with great compassion at those who sought refuge with him. [1062] Hence it came to obtain the name of Bindusaras. It was flooded by the pure and auspicious waters of the Sarasvati, which are like amrita, and was frequented by large numbers of maharshis. The lake was surrounded by nets of sacred trees and creepers. Auspicious animals and birds called there. There were fruits and blossoming flowers of all the seasons. The clumps of groves were full of prosperity. There were the calls of large numbers of maddened birds. Intoxicated bees

flew around. Crazy peacocks danced around in pride. Intoxicated cuckoos challenged each other. The place was adorned with kadamba, champaka, ashoka, *karanja,* bakula*, ashana,* kunda, mandara*, kutaja* and young *chuta* trees. [1063] There were the sweet sounds of the calling of *karandava*s, *plava*s, swans, ospreys, aquatic fowl, cranes, chakravakas and *chakora*s. [1064] The place was surrounded by deer, boar, porcupines, gavayas, elephants, *gopucchas*, [1065] lions, monkeys, mongooses and musk deer. The original king entered that tirtha with his daughter. He saw the sage seated there, like a fire into which oblations had been offered. Since he had performed fierce austerities for a long time, his body blazed like lightning. However, since the illustrious one had looked at him with gentle eyes and because he had heard his words, which were like amrita, he wasn't excessively emaciated. He was tall and his eyes were like the petals of lotuses. His hair was matted and his garment was made out of bark. He seemed soiled, like a gem that had not been polished. The god among men approached him in his cottage and bowed down before him. He [1066] greeted him back respectfully, as was befitting. When he had accepted those honours and was seated, the sage remembered the instructions of the illustrious one. He controlled himself and spoke gentle and affectionate words. 'O lord! You are wandering around, for the sake of protecting the virtuous and the slaughter of the wicked. You are the one who protects with Hari's powers. I bow down to you, a representative of the pure one. Depending on the place, you assume the forms of the sun god, the moon god, Agni, Indra, Vayu, Yama, Dharma and Prachetas. You ascend your victorious chariot, decorated with a large number of jewels. On your chariot, you stretch and twang your bow with a terrible roar, terrifying the wicked. The tread of the feet of your foot soldiers makes the entire earth tremble. Like the sun, you wander around with a large army. O king! Thus, you establish all the rules and the norms for the varnas and the ashramas that have been laid down by the illustrious one, but are violated by bandits. When you sleep, the adharma of greedy and unrestrained men flourishes. This world will be taken over by bandits and destroyed. O brave one! Let me ask you the reason why you have come here. Without any hesitation, we will carry out whatever is in your heart.'"'

Chapter 3(22)

‘Maitreya said, “All of his qualities and deeds were praised by the sage in this way. The emperor seemed to be ashamed and replied in the following words.

‘“Manu said, ‘With a desire to preserve himself, Brahma, who is full of the metres, created you [1067] from his mouth and you are full of austerities, learning and yoga, and are free from lust. The one with the one thousand hands and one thousand feet created us for your protection. It is therefore said that brahmanas are his heart and kshatriyas are his limbs. Hence, brahmanas and kshatriyas protect each other. The lord of cause and effect protects all of us in this way. O illustrious one! After seeing you, all my doubts have been dispelled. You have affectionately explained to me the dharma of one who wishes to protect. You cannot easily be seen by those who have not cleansed their souls. O illustrious one! It is good fortune that I have been able to see you. You are everything that is auspicious. It is good fortune that I have been able to touch the dust on your feet with my head. It is good fortune that I have been instructed by you. You have shown me a great favour. It is good fortune that such pure words have entered through the openings in my ears. O sage! I am suffering because of my affection towards this daughter of mine. You should listen to this miserable one and having heard, show me your compassion. This daughter of mine is the sister of Priyavrata and Uttanapada. She wishes to be united with a husband who is her equal in age, conduct and qualities. Since she heard from Narada about your conduct, learning, beauty, age and qualities, she has fixed her mind only on you. O best among brahmanas! Therefore, accept her. I am respectfully offering her to you. She is exactly like you in her soul and will assist you in performing the duties of a householder. Even if one has freed oneself from attachment, not to speak of someone who is attached to desire, the refusal of a desired objective, when it is offered on its own, is not praised. If a person refuses something that has been offered and then seeks it from a miser, his pervasive fame is destroyed. His respect is destroyed because others ignore

him. O learned one! I have heard that you wish to marry. Therefore, to terminate your vow, [1068] please accept the one I am offering to you.'

'"The rishi replied, 'It is certainly the case that I wish to marry, nor have I promised anyone else. Your daughter and I are similar in age. Therefore, our marriage has the required sanction. O lord! Let your daughter's desire be fulfilled and let the marriage take place in accordance with the proper rites. Who will not accept your daughter? Through her own beauty, she surpasses Shri. [1069] When she plays with a ball on the terrace of your palace, her eyes excited and the anklets tinkling on her feet, her beauty is enhanced. On seeing her, Vishvavasu's senses were confounded and he fell down from his chariot. She is Manu's daughter and Uttanapada's sister. She is an ornament among women and those who have not served at Shri's feet cannot see her. When she approaches on her own, which wise person will not welcome this? Therefore, I will accept this virtuous one, for as long as she accepts my seed. After that, I will follow the revered dharma of the best of the paramahamsas, spoken about by the illustrious one, which is free from violence. [1070] This wonderful universe exists and will be dissolved because of the lord of the Prajapatis. He is the illustrious and infinite one and he is the supreme yardstick for me.'"

'Maitreya said, "O wielder of a fierce bow! He said this and became silent, using his mind to meditate on the one who has a lotus in his navel. Devahuti's mind was captivated by his smiling face. After having clearly got to know the intentions of his queen and Devahuti, he was delighted and bestowed his daughter, who was equal to him in qualities. Full of affection, Empress Shatarupa bestowed extremely expensive marriage gifts, like ornaments, garments and household articles on the couple. The emperor was freed from the anxiety of bestowing his daughter on an appropriate groom. He was full of great anxiety [1071] and embraced her in his arms. He was incapable of bearing the separation and repeatedly shed tears. His daughter's hair was drenched with the tears from his eyes and he exclaimed, 'O mother! O child!' He took permission from the best among sages to leave. With his wife, the king ascended the chariot and left for his own city. Along both banks of the beautiful river, Sarasvati, he saw the prosperous hermitages of

tranquil rishis and the beautiful abodes of rishis. The subjects got to know that their lord was returning from Brahmavarta. They rejoiced and greeted him with songs of praise and the playing of musical instruments. When Yajna Varaha shook his body, his body hair fell down at a spot. This became the city known as Barhishmati and it was endowed with every kind of wealth and prosperity. Evergreen and shining kusha and *kasha* grass grew there. The sages used these to perform sacrifices and defeat those who caused obstructions to sacrifices. The illustrious Manu spread out a mat of kusha and kasha grass. He performed sacrifices to the Purusha from whom he had obtained this place on earth. The lord entered the place named Barhishmati, where he resided. He entered his residence, which was free from the three kinds of torment. [1072] With his wife and his subjects, he enjoyed the objects of pleasure, without any impediments. His deeds were sung about by celestial singers, along with their wives. Every day, at the time of dawn, he listened to Hari's account with a devoted heart. Svayambhuva Manu was immersed in yoga maya and was like a sage. The enjoyment could not make him deviate from the supreme and illustrious one. He listened to accounts of Vishnu's deeds, meditated on them and composed and spoke about them. Thus, the yamas in the manvantara allotted to him passed. His own manvantara lasted for seventy-one yugas. He spent them being associated with Vasudeva and overcame the three kinds of torment. O friend! If men seek refuge with Hari, how can hardships due to the body, mind and divine or earthy reasons constrain them? He was asked by sages and told them about the many kinds of auspicious dharma that should be followed by men in different varnas and ashramas. He was engaged in the welfare of all creatures. This is the extraordinary conduct of the original king, Manu. I have described it to you and it is worthy of being described. Now hear about his prosperous daughter."'

Chapter 3(23)

‘Maitreya said, “When her parents left, the virtuous one understood the wishes of her husband. She always tended to him affectionately, just as Bhavani [1073] does to the lord Bhava. She was pure in her mind and self-controlled. Without any guile, she tended to him with affection and spoke to him in sweet words. She gave up desire, pride, hatred, greed and vanity. With undeviating attention, she always satisfied her energetic husband. Manu’s daughter followed the vows of the noble devarshi, looking upon him as superior to a divinity. She expected great benedictions from her husband. After a long period of time, she became weak because of the vows she had observed. Grieving and driven by compassion, he spoke to her in words that were full of love.

‘“Kardama said, ‘O Manu’s daughter! I am satisfied with your respect, supreme service and supreme devotion. Everyone who possesses a body loves that body. However, you have not tended to it properly and have become emaciated for my sake. I have been engaged in my own dharma and in austerities and meditation. Through the favours of the illustrious one, I have obtained learning and yoga in my atman. Through serving me, you have also obtained those. I am giving you the insight that will drive away fear and grief. All material objects obtained are destroyed through the illustrious Urukrama merely bending his eyebrows. What use are they? By milking your own dharma, you have obtained this divine success. Enjoy it. Men find this extremely difficult to obtain, including kings who perform rites.’”

‘Maitreya continued, “He possessed the strength of yoga maya and was accomplished in knowledge. When she heard what he said, the lady was satisfied. Her face beamed with smiles. She glanced at him bashfully. She spoke in humble words that choked with love.

‘“Devahuti said, ‘O bull among brahmanas! O husband! I know that you have obtained success and that you are the master of yoga maya. I know your powers. However, a promise was made that a proper physical union between us should take place. For virtuous women, delivering a child is a great quality. Therefore, instruct about what must be done for that purpose.

I have become emaciated because my great passion has not been satisfied. Let the poor body be fit so that the desire in my mind can be fulfilled. O lord! Also think about a suitable house.'"

'Maitreya continued, "O Kshatta! To do what would bring pleasure to his beloved, Kardama resorted to yoga. He produced a vimana that could travel wherever one willed. It was divine and had all the objects of pleasure. It was decorated with all kinds of gems. Its prosperity kept on gradually increasing. There were pillars encrusted with jewels. There were divine objects and it was pleasant in all the seasons. It was ornamented with colourful festoons and flags. There were colourful garlands and bees sweetly hummed around them. Many articles of fine cotton and silk were spread around. Beds, beautiful couches, whisks and seats were separately arranged in storeys that were progressively laid out on top of each other. Here and there, it was decorated with works of artisans. The floors were made out of emeralds and the platforms were made out of coral. The entrances had thresholds made out of red coral and the doors were made out of diamonds. The summits were fashioned out of blue sapphire and pots made out of gold were placed atop these. The excellent rubies set in walls made out of diamonds seemed to be like eyes. There were colourful canopies and the extremely expensive arches were made out of gold. Many swans and pigeons called out. They mistook the artificial ones to belong to their own kind and repeatedly flew towards them. There were places for pleasure, chambers for resting, rooms for sleeping, quadrangles and outer courtyards, all constructed comfortably. He [1074] was himself astounded. He saw that she was looking at the house and wasn't quite pleased in her heart. Kardama, who could understand the wishes of all creatures, himself spoke to her. [1075] 'O timid one! Have a bath in this lake and then ascend the vimana. This tirtha has been created by the illustrious one and bestows all the wishes that men want.' The lotus-eyed one listened to her husband's words. She was attired in soiled garments and the hair on her head was matted. Her limbs were covered with filth and her covered breasts were discoloured. She entered the lake in the Sarasvati, the store of auspicious waters. In a house inside the lake, there were one thousand maidens. All of them were young in age and

bore the scent of fragrant lotuses. On seeing her, the women stood up immediately. They joined their hands in salutation and asked, 'We are your servant-maids. Please tell us what we can do for you.' With extremely expensive articles required for a bath, they bathed the spirited one. They respectfully gave her two new and spotless garments. They gave her extremely expensive ornaments that were excellent and radiant. They gave her food that possessed all the qualities and liquor that was like amrita to drink. She saw herself in a mirror, with garlands and spotless garments. With a great deal of respect, the maidens decorated her with auspicious marks. She bathed and her head was washed. She was adorned with every kind of ornament. There was a golden necklace around her neck. Her bangles, girdle and anklets tinkled. There was a golden girdle, encrusted with many kinds of jewels, around her hips. She was adorned with an extremely expensive and beautiful necklace. Her teeth were excellent. Her eyebrows were excellent. The edges of her eyes were gentle and soft and rivalled lotus buds. There was shining and dark blue hair around her face. As soon as she remembered her beloved husband, the bull among rishis, she found herself, with the women, where Prajapati was. Surrounded by those one thousand women, she found herself in her husband's presence. On seeing the power of his yoga, a doubt arose in her. He saw her, clean after the bath, and shining as she had never done before. Her shining form was beautiful and her charming breasts were covered. She was attired in excellent garments and one thousand *vidyadhari*s [1076] were in attendance. O destroyer of enemies! Full of affection towards her, he made her ascend the vimana. His greatness was not diminished inside the vimana. She loved him and he was himself served by those vidyadharis. He was as radiant as the lord of the stars surrounded by the stars, followed by large numbers of blooming night lotuses. [1077] In that vimana, he went to the valleys of the Indra among kulachalas. [1078] This is where the eight *lokapala*s seek their pleasure. [1079] Ananga's friend, the breeze, blows pleasantly there. The heavenly river [1080] descends there, with an auspicious sound. Praised by the Siddhas and surrounded by the women, he enjoyed there for a long time, like the lord of treasures. [1081] With his beautiful wife, he enjoyed himself in gardens like Vaishrambhaka,

Surasena, Nandana, Pushpabhadraka, Manasa and Chaitraratha. [1082] His splendid and great vimana could travel anywhere at will. In that, surpassing all the others who possessed vimanas, he travelled throughout the worlds, like the wind. For men who are determined in their minds and seek refuge at the tirtha of the illustrious one's feet, the dispeller of hardships, what is difficult to accomplish? He showed his wife the globe of the earth and how everything was established, full of great wonders. The great yogi then returned to his hermitage. Manu's daughter was eager for intercourse and he divided himself into nine parts. As he enjoyed and gave pleasure to the beautiful one, many years passed like an instant. In the vimana, she lay down on an excellent bed that increased her sexual desire. Desiring the company of her husband, she was not aware of the amount of time that had passed. The couple desired intercourse and used their powers of yoga. A hundred autumns passed in satisfying desire, but it was only like an instant. The lord, who knew about his atman, was capable of discerning everyone's wishes and satisfying them. He divided himself into nine parts and deposited his seed. Thus, on the same day, Devahuti gave birth to nine daughters. All of them were beautiful in all their limbs and bore the fragrance of red lotuses. Seeing that her husband was about to leave, the beautiful one outwardly showed the signs of smiling. However, her heart was agitated and sad. Her feet were beautiful with nails that were like gems. With a lowered face, she scratched on the ground with these nails. Restraining her tears, she spoke soft and charming words.

'"Devahuti said, 'O illustrious one! You have fulfilled everything that you promised. However, since I have sought refuge with you, you should grant me freedom from fear. O brahmana! Your daughters will themselves have to search out husbands who are their equals. When you leave for the forest, who will dispel my grief? O lord! I have spent a great deal of time in pandering to the objects of the senses and have abandoned the paramatman. I have acted so as to remain attached to the objects of the senses. I remained ignorant about your supreme sentiments. Therefore, grant me freedom from fear. Attachment to the cycle of birth and death is ordained for those who are wicked and without intelligence. It has been said that any association

with virtuous people leads to non-attachment. If a person does not perform acts of dharma, does not observe non-attachment and does not serve the one whose feet are a tirtha, even if he is alive, he is as good as dead. Indeed, I have been firmly deceived by the illustrious one's maya. Therefore, though I could have obtained emancipation from you, I did not free myself from the bondage.'"'

Chapter 3(24)

'Maitreya said, "Manu's daughter spoke praiseworthy words about non-attachment. The compassionate sage remembered what had been said by the illustrious one and spoke to her.

'"The rishi said, 'O princess! O praiseworthy one! Do not be dejected about yourself in this way. The illustrious and undecaying one will soon enter your womb. O fortunate one! Using *dama* and niyama, follow the vows, perform austerities and donate wealth. [1083] Worship the lord faithfully. When the illustrious one is worshipped by you, he will enhance my fame. As your son, he will impart knowledge about the brahman and severe the bonds in your heart.'"

'Maitreya continued, "Devahuti honoured Prajapati's command. With complete respect, she worshipped the preceptor who is deep inside everyone. After a long period of time had elapsed, the illustrious Madhusudana was born from Kardama's seed, like fire from kindling. At that time, there were clouds in the sky and musical instruments were sounded from within the clouds. Gandharvas sang and apsaras danced in joy. Extremely happy, those who roamed around in the sky showered down divine flowers. All the directions, the waters and everyone's mind was pleased. Svayambhu came to Kardama's hermitage, surrounded by the Sarasvati, along with the rishis, Marichi and the others. O slayer of enemies! Aja, the self-ruling one, knew that the illustrious supreme brahman, in his portion of sattva, had been born, so as to teach knowledge of samkhya. With a pure heart, he worshipped

what the illustrious one desired to do. Delighted, he addressed Kardama [1084] in these words.

'"Brahma said, 'O son! You have worshipped me without any duplicity and the objective has been accomplished. O one who shows honours! You have respected my words. This is exactly the kind of service that sons should render to their father. With respectful words of agreement, the senior's words must be complied with. O child! These honest daughters of yours are slender-waisted. They will expand this creation and they will have a large number of progeny. Therefore, according to conduct and taste, bestow them on the best among rishis. Give your daughters away today and your fame will spread throughout the earth. I know that, using his own maya, Purusha has descended today. O sage! For the sake of creatures, that treasure has assumed the body of Kapila. His hair is golden and matted. He is lotus-eyed. He bears the marks of the lotus. His feet are like lotuses. He will uproot all karma through jnana, vijnana and yoga. O woman! Kaitabha's slayer [1085] has entered your womb. He will sever the bonds of ignorance and doubt and roam around the earth. He is the lord of the large number of Siddhas. He will be extremely revered by the teachers of samkhya. In this world, he will be known as Kapila. He will wander around and increase your fame.'"

'Maitreya continued, "Along with the Kumaras [1086] and Narada, the couple was thus assured by the creator of the universe. Brahma [1087] then mounted his vehicle, yoked to swans, and went to his region, above the three worlds. O Kshatta! When he had left, the performer of the one hundred sacrifices [1088] urged Kardama. As instructed, he bestowed his own daughters on the procreators of the universe. He gave Kala to Marichi, Anasuya to Atri, Shraddha to Angiras, Havirbhu to Pulastya, Gati to Pulaha, the virtuous Kriya to Kratu, Khyati to Bhrigu and Arundhati to Vasishtha. He gave Shanti to Atharvan, the one who extends a sacrifice. Having married, the bulls among the brahmanas left for their own abodes with their wives. O Kshatta! After marrying, the rishis took their leave from him. Having obtained it, they happily left for their own respective hermitages. Having learnt that Triyuga, the bull among the gods had descended, he went to him

in a secluded spot. [1089] He bowed down before him and said, 'Because of their own inauspicious deeds, the wicked ones are being cooked in hell. Indeed, the gods have been pleased after a very long time. Ascetics meditate properly in yoga, in secluded spots, and ripen themselves through many lives, endeavouring to see his feet. Though we are the lowest of the low, that illustrious one has been born in our house today, so as to nurture his devotees, even if they are ordinary. O one who increases the respect of his devotees! O illustrious one! You desire to impart knowledge. O illustrious one! Though you do not have form, all of these are your forms. Whatever forms cause delight to your devotees are forms appropriate for you. The seat of your feet deserves to be always worshipped by gods who desire to comprehend the truth. You are full of prosperity, non-attachment, fame, knowledge, strength and prosperity. I seek refuge with you. You are transcendental and supreme. You are the great Purusha. You are wise time. You are the three modes. [1090] You are the protector of the world. Through his own powers, he has assimilated the entire universe into his atman. He is the one who exerts his powers easily. I seek refuge with Kapila. You are the lord of all subjects. I seek something from you today. Since you have taken your descent, I have freed from all debts and my desires have been fulfilled. I wish to travel along various paths, with you in my heart, and bereft of all sorrows.'

'"The illustrious one replied, 'Whatever I speak, whether it is in the sacred texts or in ordinary speech, is a yardstick for the world. O sage! Therefore, since what I told you should not become false, I have been born to you. My birth in this world is for those who seek liberation from the linga sharira. This is for expounding the revered truth that leads to realization of the atman. This path of self-realization of the unmanifest atman has been lost for a long period of time. Know that I have assumed this body for the sake of propagating it. You sought my permission. With my permission, go where you want. Give up all rites. [1091] Conquer death, which is so very difficult to vanquish. For the sake of immortality, worship me. You will see the self-resplendent atman in me, the one that is inside the hearts of all living beings. Look at the atman inside your own atman. Be free from sorrow and

fear. I will bestow the adhyatma [1092] knowledge that extinguishes all karma on my mother. Through this, she will also overcome all fear.'"

'Maitreya continued, "Prajapati was thus addressed by Kapila. He circumambulated him, keeping him to the right, [1093] and cheerfully left for the forest. Seeking refuge in the atman, the sage took to the vow of silence. He roamed around the earth, without any attachment. He did not light a fire, nor did he have a house. He fixed his mind on the brahman and on the supreme that is beyond cause and effect. This is the one who has no gunas, but manifests himself in the form of the gunas. He can only be perceived through single-minded devotion. He became free of ego and free of any sense of ownership. He became free of the opposite pairs of sentiments. [1094] He looked within himself and was impartial towards everything. He looked inwards and became tranquil, like the calm waves of the ocean. His sentiments were full of great devotion towards the illustrious and omniscient Vasudeva, who is inside everyone's atman. He realized the atman and became free of bondage. He saw that the illustrious one was in the atmans of all creatures. He saw the atman in all creatures and the illustrious one in his own atman. He was devoid of desires and hatred. He looked at everyone with an impartial mind. Immersed in devotion towards the illustrious one, he obtained the illustrious one as a destination."'

Chapter 3(25)

Shounaka said, 'The illustrious Kapila, the expounder of the truth about samkhya, is himself without birth. However, for the purpose of teaching men about the atman, the illustrious one used his own maya to be born himself. He was indeed a great man, supreme among yogis. His glory is described in the sacred texts. I have heard about him, but my senses are still not satisfied. Using the maya of his own atman, the illustrious one undertakes everything easily. I am devoted to him. Please recount all his deeds.'

Suta said, 'The illustrious Maitreya was Dvaipayana's friend. Thus asked by Vidura about transcendental knowledge, he cheerfully spoke about it.

‘Maitreya continued, “When his father left for the forest, he wished to do that which would bring his mother pleasure. Therefore, the illustrious Kapila resided in Bindusara. When he was seated comfortably, Devahuti remembered the words that the creator had spoken to her. Therefore, seeking the path that would lead to the truth, she spoke to her own son.

‘“Devahuti said, ‘O lord! I am extremely disgusted with the agitation caused by the transient senses. O lord! Because they are pervasive, I am immersed in the darkness of ignorance. It is extremely difficult to reach the other shore of this darkness of ignorance. But you are like my true insight. Through your favours, I have obtained you after many births. You are the original illustrious one. You are indeed the lord of all creatures. The world is blinded by the darkness of ignorance and like the sun, you have arisen like an eye. O god! Therefore, you should dispel my delusion. You have yourself created this sense of misconception about me and mine. You are the refuge and I have sought refuge with you. For your devotees, you are like an axe that severs the tree of *samsara*. [1095] I wish to know about Prakriti and Purusha. You are best among those who know about true dharma and I am bowing down before you.’”

‘Maitreya continued, “He heard his mother’s unadulterated wishes, which increases the desire for emancipation in men. He applauded her intelligence, which had turned towards the atman, the destination sought by the virtuous. With a smile on his beautiful face, he replied.

‘“The illustrious one said, ‘In my view, *adhyatma yoga* is the best for men. This leads to complete detachment from happiness and unhappiness. O unblemished one! In ancient times, I spoke about this yoga to the rishis who wished to hear about it. I will tell you about it, with all its complements. The mind is indeed the bond for an atman that seeks to be free. When attached to the gunas, it is the cause of bondage. When one is attached to the Purusha, there is emancipation. When the mind transcends me, mine, ego and impurities like desire and avarice, it is pure and looks upon pleasure and pain impartially. Then the atman is seen to be the absolute Purusha, beyond Prakriti. It is immutable, self-luminous, minute and indivisible. The person is then full of knowledge and non-attachment and full of

devotion. He perceives himself to be indifferent and material existence loses its strength. If yogis want success in attaining the brahman, there is no path as auspicious as that of being immersed in devotion towards the illustrious one who is in all atmans. Wise men know that strong attachment [1096] is what binds the atman down. However, when that attachment is applied to something virtuous, it opens up the door to emancipation. Virtuous people possess virtuous traits as ornaments. They are tolerant, compassionate, friendly towards all creatures and tranquil. They have no enemies. Their hearts are fixed only on me, firm in devotion. For my sake, they abandon all action and abandon their relatives and friends. They seek me as a refuge. They hear and converse about my accounts. Since their minds are on me, they are not tormented by different kinds of torments. O virtuous lady! Those who have given up all kinds of attachment are virtuous. You must seek association with such people. That way, the taint of attachment will be removed from you. In the association with virtuous people, there is conversation about my deeds of valour, pleasing to the ear and the heart. By serving them, faith, love and devotion are progressively developed and these quickly take one along the path to liberation. Through devotion, non-attachment towards the senses is developed in a man. He sees, hears and thinks about my deeds. His mind accepts these and becomes united with yoga. He easily seeks to follow the path of yoga. He does not serve the attributes of Prakriti. Knowledge and non-attachment develop. Through yoga and fixed devotion towards me, in this life, he obtains me, the one who resides in all atmans.'

'"Devahuti asked, 'What kind of devotion towards you is fit to be practised by me? How can I instantly obtain liberation at your feet? O embodiment of emancipation! You have said that yoga flies like an arrow towards the illustrious one. How many limbs does it have? How does one understand the truth about it? O Hari! Since I am a woman who is limited in intelligence, please explain this to me. Through your favours, I will easily understand what is difficult to understand.'"

'Maitreya continued, "Kapila understood his mother's intention. Affection was generated in him towards the one he had been born from. There-

fore, he explained to her the tattvas [1097] that are spoken of as samkhya and he also told her about the course of bhakti yoga.

‘“The illustrious one said, ‘If a person is single-minded and devoted to the illustrious one, this is superior to being successful. The natural tendency is to then offer the presiding deities of the senses of perception and rites prescribed in the sacred texts to him, without any motive. This is the tattva. Just as fire digests what has been eaten, this quickly dissolves the linga sharira. There are those who do not desire to become one with me. They do everything for me and are engaged in serving at my feet. These devotees associate with each other and describe my glorious exploits. O mother! These devotees see my beautiful and divine forms, with smiling faces and red eyes. They desire to speak to these forms, the granters of boons. They see these charming forms, with exalted limbs, the pastimes, the smiles, the pleasant glances and the delightful words. Their minds and their senses are captivated. Though they do not desire it, because of their devotion, they are united with me as a destination. They do not desire the blissful prosperity of the illustrious one or the powers of the lord of maya. Nor do they aspire for the eight kinds of siddhis. However, with me, the supreme one, they enjoy these in my world. O one who is serene in form! There, those who are devoted to me are never destroyed. Weapons and time cannot harm them. I am loved by them like a son, a friend, a preceptor, a well-wisher, a divinity and like their own selves. In this world, if people give up all wealth, animals, houses and everything else and only worship me, whose face is in every direction, with single-minded devotion, I take them away beyond death. When they give up their bodies, I take their atmans beyond this world and the next. There is no one other than me, the illustrious one, the supreme lord and Purusha, the one who is in the atmans of all creatures, who can counter this terrible fear. [1098] It is out of fear from me that the wind blows. It is out of fear from me that the sun heats. It is out of fear from me that Indra showers, Agni burns and death roams around. Using bhakti yoga, united with knowledge and non-attachment, yogis obtain welfare at my feet and enter there, without any fear. In this world, this is the only way for men to obtain welfare. Firm in bhakti yoga, their minds must be firmly fixed on me.’”’

Chapter 3(26)

‘“‘The illustrious one said, ‘I will now separately tell you about the characteristics of the tattvas. Through knowing these, a man is free from the gunas of Prakriti. I will tell you about the supreme knowledge that men who have realized the atman describe as something that severs the bonds of the heart. Purusha is the atman who is without a beginning and is nirguna. He is distinct from Prakriti and is superior. He manifests himself inside and is self-luminous. It is through him that the universe is maintained. As part of his pastimes and his own will, the lord has accepted this subtle and divine Prakriti, who possesses all the gunas. Creating many kinds of gunas, Prakriti creates subjects who are similar in form. Prakriti shrouds knowledge and on seeing this, everyone in the world is instantly confounded. Prakriti’s act, undertaken through the gunas, is identified as that of Purusha and it is thought that Purusha is the one who performs these acts. The lord is not the doer. His atman is that of an indifferent witness. But he is bound down in this cycle of creation and assumes a state of dependence. Learned ones know that Prakriti is cause, effect and the doer. Purusha is superior to Prakriti, but is seen to be the one who experiences pleasure and pain.’

‘“‘Devahuti said, ‘O Purushottama! Tell me about the characteristics of Purusha and Prakriti. They are the cause behind this creation, which is both manifest and unmanifest.’

‘“‘The illustrious one replied, ‘The three gunas are unmanifest and eternal. In this form, they are cause and effect and are known as Pradhana. When the undifferentiated becomes differentiated, this is known as Prakriti. [1099] The learned know the brahman as the effects of Pradhana, with an aggregate of twenty-four attributes—five, five and fourteen. [1100] There are five *mahabhutas*—earth, water, fire, air and space. It is my view that their tanmatras, smell and the others, are also similar in number. There are ten organs of sense and these are said to be ears, skin, eyes, tongue, nose, the organ of speech, hands, feet, organ of generation and the anus as the tenth. Those that are internal are *manas*, buddhi, ahamkara and *chitta*. The differ-

ence between these four is noticed in the way they function. [1101] These are enumerated as the attributes of the brahman and I have spoken about their arrangement. Time is the twenty-fifth. It is said that the power of Purusha that causes fear is time. This is because the individual atman is confounded by ahamkara, having come into contact with Prakriti. [1102] O Manu's daughter! The undifferentiated gunas of Prakriti were in equilibrium. However, when the illustrious one caused an agitation, this came to be noticed as time. He is in the form of Purusha inside and is in the form of time on the outside. Using his own maya, the illustrious one controls and is inside all living entities. The supreme Purusha agitates his own womb [1103] and deposits his own seed, driven by the dharma of destiny. She delivered the golden tattva known as Mahat. The seed of the universe was hidden inside it and was immutable. The universe was inside it and manifested itself. Through his own energy, the illustrious one drank up the terrible darkness, the darkness that causes the sleep. [1104] The quality of sattva is pure and tranquil and is the abode of the illustrious one. This is the consciousness made up of Mahat tattva and is known by the name of Vasudeva. The attributes of consciousness are clearness, lack of change and tranquility. It is said to be like water in its natural state, before it assumes characteristics. [1105] Mahat tattva resulted from the illustrious one's energy and underwent change. This led to the three kinds of ahamkara that have the capacity to perform action. Vaikarika, taijasa and tamasa were created and so were the mind, the senses and the mahabhutas. The manifestation of Purusha with the elements, the senses and the mind is known as Samkarshana. He possesses one thousand heads and is Ananta himself. The characteristics of ahamkara are being the doer, being the instrument and being the effect, or alternatively, serenity, terror and confusion. [1106] The mind resulted from modifications of sattvika or vaikarika ahamkara. This has the traits of thinking and reflection and desire results from these. The learned know this by the name of Aniruddha, the lord of the senses. He is dark blue, like a blue lotus in the autumn. The yogis propitiate him gently. O virtuous lady! The modification of taijasa ahamkara created intelligence. This confers the ability to identify objects and facilitates the senses. The separate characteristics of intelligence are

said to be doubt, misapprehension, right perception, memory and sleep. The senses are created from taijasa ahamkara and are classified into organs of perception and organs of action. The breath of life is the power behind organs of action. [1107] Intelligence is the power behind organs of perception. Urged by the illustrious one's energy, tamasa ahamkara was transformed. This led to the tanmatra known as sound and then to the element of space. The sense of hearing evolved from sound. Wise people know that the characteristics of the tanmatra that results from space, that is, sound, are the capacity to convey meaning, to demonstrate this to the speaker and to be the subtle form of space. The functions and characteristics of space are to provide space for beings, cover them from the inside and from the outside, and to provide support to the actions of the breath of life, the senses and the mind. The tanmatra of space, sound, was transformed by the progress of time. Touch resulted and the wind resulted from this. The skin leads to the perception of touch. Touch is the tanmatra of the wind. The characteristics of touch are softness, hardness, cold and heat. The action of the wind is characterized by movement, accumulation, receiving and conveying particles associated with sound [1108] and providing support to all the senses to perform their actions. Urged by destiny, the wind's tanmatra, sound, assumes different forms. Fire arose from this and the eye, which perceives different kinds of *rupa*. [1109] O virtuous lady! The characteristics of the tanmatra known as rupa are to assign dimensions, quality, individuality and position to an object and to impart radiance to fire. The attributes of fire are to illuminate, to cook, to drink, to eat, to destroy cold, to dry and to lead to feelings of hunger and thirst. Urged by destiny, the fire's tanmatra, rupa, went through transformations. This resulted in the tanmatra known as taste. Water was produced from this and the tongue, which perceives taste. Taste is one. However, when it comes into contact with substances, it assumes different forms like astringent, sweet, bitter, pungent and sour. The characteristics of water are moistening, coagulating, causing satisfaction, sustaining life, refreshing, softening, driving away heat and providing abundance. Urged by destiny, water's tanmatra, taste, went through transformations. The tanmatra known as smell resulted. The earth was produced from this

and the sense of smell, which perceives smell. Smell is one. However, when it comes into contact and mixes with different proportions of substances, it assumes diverse traits like mixed odour, offensive odour, fragrance, mild fragrance, strong fragrance, acidic odour and so on. The characteristics and functions of the earth are forming a perception of the brahman, finding a place for itself, sustaining other objects and to provide for differentiations among creatures in terms of their qualities. The distinctive quality of space is said to be the ear, the organ which perceives sound. The learned know that the distinctive quality of air is the tactile organ, which perceives touch. The distinctive quality of fire is said to be the eye. The learned know that the distinctive quality of water is the perception of taste. The distinctive quality of the earth is said to be the organ of smell. The cause is seen to exist in the effect. Thus, the traits of the former exist in the latter. Hence, all the traits are seen to be found in the earth. When the seven, Mahat and the others, [1110] were separate, the origin of the universe entered them, along with time, action and the gunas. They came together and were activated in this way and an egg that was without intelligence was created. Virat Purusha arose from this. This egg is known as Vishesha and is surrounded by layers, water and the others, each progressive layer ten times larger than the preceding one. On the outside, they are covered by Pradhana. This extensive world is the illustrious Hari's form. He arose from the golden egg that was lying down in the water. The great god entered this space and divided it into many parts. The mouth emerged first and speech was generated from the mouth. Along with speech, Agni and the nostrils were created and prana and the sense of smell. Vayu emerged from the sense of smell and the two eyes and the sense of seeing. Surya evolved from this, the two ears and the sense of hearing. The directions resulted from this. Virat Purusha's skin appeared and his hair, beard and moustache. The herbs and plants were created from this. The penis was generated thereafter. Semen resulted and water was created from this. The anus appeared and apana was created from the anus. It is because of apana that the world suffers from the fear of death. The hands were created and strength resulted from this. The self-ruling one [1111] was created from this. The feet and locomotion were manifested and

Hari issued from this. The blood vessels were formed and the red blood, which resulted in the rivers. The stomach emerged thereafter. Hunger and thirst were formed and the ocean was formed from them. The heart was created and the mind arose from the heart. The moon was born from the mind. Intelligence resulted and the lord of speech [1112] was born from intelligence. Ahamkara and Rudra were created. Consciousness was manifested, along with the divinity who presides over consciousness. Though these different divinities were created, they were incapable of making him [1113] wake up. Therefore, so as to make him arise, they again entered their respective positions in his body. Agni and speech entered the mouth, but Virat did not wake up. Vayu and the sense of smell entered the nostrils, but Virat did not wake up. Aditya [1114] and the sense of seeing entered the eyes, but Virat did not wake up. The directions and the sense of hearing entered the ears, but Virat did not wake up. The herbs and plants and the body hair entered the skin, but Virat did not wake up. Semen and water entered the penis, but Virat did not wake up. Death and apana entered the anus, but Virat did not wake up. Indra and strength entered the hands, but Virat did not wake up. Vishnu and locomotion entered the feet, but Virat did not wake up. The rivers and blood entered the blood vessels, but Virat did not wake up. Hunger, thirst and the ocean entered the stomach, but Virat did not wake up. The moon and the mind entered the heart, but Virat did not wake up. Brahma and intelligence entered the heart, but Virat did not wake up. Rudra and ahamkara entered the heart, but Virat did not wake up. Consciousness and Kshetrajna, the lord of consciousness, then entered the heart. At this, Virat Purusha arose from the waters. When a man is asleep, prana, the senses and the mind have no power to wake him up on the basis of their own powers alone. Therefore, through devotion, non-attachment, knowledge, intelligence and adherence to yoga, one should think about the supreme atman [1115] that is inside one's own atman.'"'

Chapter 3(27)

“‘The illustrious one said, ‘Though Purusha resides in a body created by Prakriti, he is not touched by Prakriti’s gunas. He is without gunas and without change. He has no attributes of being a doer. He is like the sun, distinct from its reflection in the water. When the gunas of Prakriti are absorbed by the jivatman, he becomes confounded because of the action of ahamkara and takes himself to be the doer. Therefore, he helplessly has to undergo his position in samsara and is not satisfied. Because of being associated with faulty action, he is born as superior, middling and inferior species. [1116] He does not really exist in this material form, but does not withdraw from it. He contemplates material objects, just as one experiences calamities in a dream. Therefore, one must use intense bhakti yoga to gradually withdraw the consciousness from this attachment to the wicked path and bring it under the forces of non-attachment. With faith, one must practise the path of yoga, yama and the other modes. A person’s sentiments must be truly immersed in me and he must chant and hear about me. He must be impartial towards all creatures, without enmity and without being attached. He must follow brahmacharya and be silent, thus strengthening his own dharma. He must be content with whatever is easily obtained. A sage must be moderate in eating. He must seek out a secluded spot. He must be tranquil, friendly and compassionate and realize his atman. He must not get attached to the body and the unreal possessions associated with it. Through knowledge, he will comprehend the truth about Prakriti and Purusha. He must withdraw his intelligence from material existence and keep any other such conceptions far away. Just as one sees the sun with one’s eyes, one will then be able to realize the atman in one’s own self. He will be freed from the linga sharira, which appears to be real, though it is unreal. This is because faulty insight has entered the real, though everything is without duality. The reflection of the sun in the water can be seen in its second reflected image on a wall. But the sun is actually situated in the sky. In this way, a person who has realized the truth can realize the radiance of the real [1117] in its reflections in the three kinds of ahamkara, the elements, the senses and the mind. When one is asleep, the elements, their subtle tanma-

tras, the senses, the mind are absorbed in the unmanifest. [1118] The one who is awake and without ahamkara is the atman. In that state, a seer may take himself to have been destroyed, but that sense of destruction is false. This is because ahamkara has been destroyed. One feels afflicted, like a person whose wealth has been destroyed. In this way, one comprehends one's atman, which is the one who makes ahamkara and material objects manifest and is the foundation.'

'"Devahuti asked, 'O brahmana! O lord! How can Prakriti ever be separated from Purusha? They are both eternal and depend on each other. The earth and its attribute of smell and water and its attribute of taste can never exist independently. Nor can intelligence and that which is superior to it. [1119] Prakriti's gunas exist and they provide a basis for Purusha. Though he is not the doer, these bind him down through action. How can emancipation from them be obtained? By reflecting on the tattvas, one may be freed from great fear. However, since the causes have not been destroyed, it will appear again.'

'"The illustrious one replied, 'One should not desire the fruits of action. With a pure mind, one must be engaged in one's own dharma. There must be intense devotion towards me and one must hear about me for a long time. Through knowledge and insight about the tattvas, non-attachment becomes stronger. One must engage in austerities and yoga and be immersed in intense meditation. Even in this world, if Prakriti is burnt down day and night, it gradually vanishes from Purusha. This is like fire, which becomes hidden inside its source, the kindling. Always looking towards its taints and after enjoying its products, Prakriti is abandoned. There is nothing inauspicious in the lord, who is established in his own greatness. If a person is asleep, many kinds of calamities appear before him in a dream. However, when he is awake, these do not have the power to confound him. In this way, if a person knows about the truth and if his mind is in me, if a person seeks delight in his own atman, Prakriti is never able to harm him. Thus, if a sage is addicted to adhyatma for a long time, over many births, and if non-attachment towards everything has arisen in him, he obtains Brahma's world. Through my favours, a devotee attains this objective. He obtains his

own state and there is nothing superior to this. He obtains refuge with me, a state that is known as that of kaivalya. [1120] In this world, such a persevering person truly obtains this state. Because of his own insight, his doubts are dispelled. Having gone there, a person does not return. [1121] Such a yogi is separated from his linga sharira. O dear one! There are siddhis obtained through yoga, but these are maya. When a person is not attached to these and does not pursue any other objective, he obtains me as a destination. This is the infinite and death's laughter is not heard there.'"'

Chapter 3(28)

"'"The illustrious one said, 'O daughter of a king! I will explain yoga to you, along with the *bija*. [1122] The mind is thereby restrained and cheerfully proceeds along the virtuous path. The performance of one's own dharma according to capacity, the avoidance of contrary dharma, satisfaction with what has been obtained through fate, worshipping the feet of those who have realized the atman, avoidance of ordinary acts of dharma, [1123] addiction to the dharma of moksha, eating in moderation, permanent stay in a peaceful and secluded spot, non-violence, truthfulness, acceptance of a minimal amount of artha, brahmacharya, austerities, purity, studying, the worship of Purusha, silence, control through good asanas, steadiness, gradual control of prana, withdrawal of the senses from objects that are dear to the heart, fixing the mind and prana in *svadhishthana*, [1124] concentration on Vaikuntha's pastimes and meditation on the atman—through these and other means, one must direct the wicked mind to the virtuous path. The intelligence must be gradually controlled. One must attentively control the breath of life. Having spread out a seat in a pure place, he must control himself through asanas. He must be seated upright, comfortably, and must control his breath. Through repeated *puraka*, *kumbhaka* and *rechaka*, [1125] he must purify the passage of prana. In this way, even if the mind is wayward, it becomes steady and fixed. If a yogi has controlled his breath of life, the mind soon becomes free of disturbances. This is like gold becoming free of impu-

rities when it is fanned by the wind and the fire. Through pranayama, one can cleanse the body of its impurities; through dharana, the sins; through pratyahara, all attachment; and through dhyana, all the gunas that are not supreme. When the mind has become completely pure and well controlled through yoga, one must meditate on the form of the illustrious one, with the eyes fixed on the tip of the nose. His lotus face is gracious. His eyes are red, like the inside of a lotus. His complexion is dark blue, like the petals of a blue lotus. He wields the conch shell, chakra and mace. His silk garments are yellow and they shine like the filament of a lotus. He bears the shrivatsa mark on his chest. The brilliant Koustubha jewel is around his neck. He wears a garland of wild flowers and crazy bees hum around it. He is adorned with an extremely expensive necklace, bracelets, diadem, armlets and anklets. There is an excellent girdle around his hips. He stands in the lotus hearts of his devotees. He is tranquil and beautiful to behold. He is charming to the mind and the eye. He is charming to behold and is eternally worshipped by all the worlds. He seems to be a young boy and showers his favours on his servants. He is a tirtha and his fame is worth describing. He has extended the fame of excellent ones. Until the mind ceases to waver, one should meditate on all the limbs of this divinity. Whether he is standing, walking, seated or lying down, with devotion and purity in his heart, he must meditate on the pastimes of the beautiful one who is inside the heart. When the sage reaches a state such that his mind is fixed on all the limbs of the illustrious one together, he must fix his mind on the limbs, one by one. He must first focus on the illustrious one's lotus feet, decorated by the signs of the vajra, a goad, a standard and a lotus. The prominent and shining red nails are like the lunar circle, dispelling the great darkness in the heart with the moonlight. He must meditate on the illustrious one's lotus feet for a long time. After washing these, the waters of the best of the rivers [1126] issued forth and became auspicious, like a tirtha. Shiva bore them on his head. In his mind, he must meditate on the vajra, [1127] which will be hurled against the mountain of sin. The lotus-eyed Lakshmi is worshipped by all the gods and is the creator's mother. [1128] His two knees are placed on her thighs and she massages them with her delicate hands. In his heart, he must

meditate on the lord's knees. Atop Suparna's [1129] shoulders, his thighs are beautiful. They are the source of energy and shine like the *atasi* flower. [1130] The excellent yellow garment extends downwards and is encircled by a girdle around his rounded hips. His navel is like a lake and is in his stomach, which is the source of the worlds. The lotus, the source of all the worlds, sprouted from there and is the seat of the self-creating one. [1131] He must meditate on the two nipples of the lord, which are like exquisite gems and appear white and resplendent, illuminated by the necklace of pearls. The supreme one's chest is the abode of great prosperity. [1132] It brings great pleasure to the minds and eyes of men. The neck enhances the beauty of the Koustubha gem. He must fix his mind on this, which is worshipped by all the worlds. The strength of the arms provide support to the guardians of the worlds. The arms were polished by the movements of Mount Mandara. [1133] He must meditate on the dazzling splendour of the one thousand spokes [1134] and the conch shell, resembling a swan, [1135] held in the hand. He must remember the beloved Koumodaki. [1136] It is smeared with mire, from the blood of enemy soldiers. The garland echoes with the buzz of bees that surround it in search of honey. He must meditate on the sparkling gem [1137] around the neck, which is like the consciousness of living beings. Out of compassion towards his servants, he assumes different forms. He must meditate on the illustrious one's lotus face. His prominent nose and clear cheeks sparkle, illuminated by the movement of the glittering earrings that are shaped like makaras. With a mind that does not waver, he must meditate on the face that is like Shri's abode. [1138] It looks beautiful because of a mass of curly hair surrounding it. It is served by bees. [1139] The lotus eyes have charming eyebrows and surpasss the beauty of a couple of fish. The frequent glances from his eyes are full of great compassion and destroy the three kinds of torment. [1140] His gentle smiles come with great favours. He is in everyone's heart and with great devotion, one must meditate on him for a long time. For all people, if one bows down to him, Hari's extremely benevolent smile dries up the terrible ocean of tears. For the sake of the sages, he has used his maya to fashion his arched eyebrows which charm and confound Makaradhvaja. [1141] One can easily meditate on his abundant laughter.

His radiant and red lips display his small teeth, which are like an array of kunda flowers. With devotion and love, one must meditate on Vishnu, who resides in the inner core of everyone's heart. With a mind fixed on him, one must not look at anything else. In this way, one develops love for the illustrious Hari. One's heart melts with devotion. One finds that the body hair stands up in delight. Immersed in this intense love, tears of joy flow repeatedly. Then the person gradually disengages his mind from the hook. [1142] When the mind is not attached to material objects and seeks refuge in emancipation, it becomes like the flame of a lamp and desires emancipation. Without being separated, the person sees the atman and is freed from the flow of the gunas. In this way, the mind resides in the ultimate and the great and withdraws from the external purveyors of happiness and unhappiness. The person attributes the cause and agent of joy and delight to his own false atman. [1143] He obtains the truth of the paramatman. When such a successful person has the good fortune of realizing his own true form, he can no longer see whether his body is moving, stationary, or is standing up. This is just like a person intoxicated and blind with liquor coming under the sway of destiny and not realizing whether he is wearing clothes or not. As long as the karma started by himself continues, the body and the senses are under the subjugation of destiny. However, if a person is situated in the yoga of samadhi, he no longer accepts material objects and the visible word. [1144] They seem to be a dream. Just as a mortal man is seen to be different from his son and his wealth, even if they are his own and he loves them, the atman is different from the body and other things. [1145] A flaming torch, sparks and smoke are distinct from the fire, though they arise from the fire and are intimately connected with it. The bhutas, the senses and the mind do arise from Pradhana, but are different from the seer. Similarly, the illustrious one, known as the brahman, is distinct from the jivatman. All creatures are in the atman and the atman is in all creatures. In this way, and in no other way, one must see the atman in all living beings. Though the fire is one, it can be seen to originate from many sources. Depending on variations in gunas in different wombs, the atman manifests itself differently in nature. This is the divine Prakriti, who is manifested as cause and effect and is extremely diffi-

cult to comprehend. After having understood this, one becomes established in one's own true form.'"'

Chapter 3(29)

"'Devahuti said, 'O lord! You have spoken about the characteristics of Mahat and the others, Prakriti, Purusha and their own manifested nature and their own true nature and foundations, as described in *Samkhya*. Now tell me in detail about the path of bhakti yoga. O illustrious one! Tell me about the many kinds of births in the world of the living, so that non-attachment towards everything can be kindled in a person. Please tell me about your own form as time and about other supreme forms. You use this form to make people undertake good acts. Because their eyes are not open, people are deluded by false ego. They remain asleep for a long time in darkness, without a refuge. Without intelligence, they are exhausted because they are bound to action. You have indeed appeared like a sun of yoga.'"

'Maitreya said, "The great sage applauded the gentle words spoken by his mother. O best among the Kurus! Pleased, he replied to her with compassion.

'"'The illustrious one replied, 'O beautiful one! It has been thought that there are many kinds of paths for bhakti yoga. Depending on their own nature, qualities and sentiments, men have divided it into various branches. If a person who engages in this has the intention of causing violence, or is insolent, jealous or angry, his insight is differentiated and he is a tamasa devotee. If a person is in pursuit of material objects, fame and prosperity, and worships me in places of worship, his insight is differentiated and he is a *rajasa* devotee. If a person desires to free himself of karma by dedicating them to the supreme, and if he worships the one who should be worshipped, his insight is differentiated [1146] and he is a sattvika devotee. I reside in everyone's heart. Just as the waters of the Ganga flow towards the ocean, merely by listening to my qualities, the mind continuously flows towards me. This is said to be the characteristic of the nirguna type of bhakti yoga.

This is the devotion towards Purushottama that is without any motive. Even if *salokya*, *sarshti*, *samipya*, *sarupya* and *ekatva* are offered, [1147] such people who are devoted to me, do not accept anything other than service to me. This is said to be the extreme form of bhakti yoga, where one transcends the three gunas and attains my state. One must be immersed in the greatness of one's own dharma and perform action without any motive. One must always be engaged in the auspicious rites, without any excessive violence. Beholding my image, seeing it, touching it, worshipping it, praising me and chanting about me, he must be non-attached and based on sattva, see me in all creatures. He must show a great deal of respect to the great, compassion towards the poor, friendship towards those who are equals and practise yama and niyama. He must hear about adhyatmika matters, chant my names, be upright, associate with noble people and be without any kind of ahamkara. When a person who follows my dharma hears about my qualities, his consciousness is completely purified. On merely hearing about my qualities, a man is attracted towards me. The wind carries a scent from the source and it is picked up by the organ of smell. In that way, a person who is devoted constantly to yoga picks up realization about the atman. I am always present in all beings, as the atman in creatures. If a mortal person ignores me, he worships something that is false. I am the lord who is present in the atmans of all beings. If a person abandons me and ignorantly worships someone else, he offers oblations into ashes. [1148] O one who offers honours! If a person hates me in someone else's body, he suffers from differentiation in his thoughts. If he is firm in enmity towards creatures, his mind will never find peace. O unblemished one! If my image is worshipped with various kinds of objects, following diverse kinds of rituals, but creatures are shown disrespect, I am not satisfied with that kind of worship. Until he knows that I am in his heart and inside all living beings, he can perform his own tasks and worship me as the lord in an image. If a person differentiates between himself and another person's body, his sight is differentiated and I cause him great fear from death. I am in all creatures and I have made my abode in the atmans of all creatures. Therefore, with friendship and without any differentiation in one's sight, I should be worshipped with donations

and respect. O auspicious one! Living beings are superior to those who do not live. Those who possess prana are superior to those who are only alive. Those who possess consciousness are superior to those who only possess the senses. Those who perceive through taste are superior to those who perceive through touch. Those who perceive through smell are superior to both of these. And those who perceive through sound are better than the earlier ones and those who perceive through form are better still. Those who possess teeth in both jaws are even better. Among these, quadrupeds are superior to those with many feet and bipeds are superior to quadrupeds. Among the four varnas, brahmanas are the best. Among brahmanas, those who know the Vedas are superior, but those who understand the meanings are superior to them too. Better than the person who knows meanings is the one who can dispel doubts and better than such a person is the one who performs his own tasks. Better than this is the person who is free of attachment, not desiring any fruits and possessing dharma in his atman. Better than him is the person who offers everything ceaselessly to me, action, wealth and his own atman. A man who renders his atman to me renders all his action to me. He acts impartially towards everyone and I do not see anyone who is superior to this. In his mind, he bows down before all creatures and shows a great deal of respect to them. He knows that parts of the illustrious lord have penetrated every living being. O Manu's daughter! I have described bhakti yoga and yoga. [1149] By following either of these, a man can attain Purusha. This is the form of the illustrious one. This is the brahman, the paramatman. This is Pradhana, Purusha and the divinity who undertakes action. The divine form that causes differences is known as time. Through differences in the elements, Mahat and the others, this gives rise to fear. He enters inside all living beings. He is the support for all living beings and also destroys them. He is known as Vishnu, the lord of sacrifices. He is time and is the lord over all controllers. There is no one whom he loves. There is no one whom he hates. He has no relative. He enters those who are not distracted. But for those who are distracted, he causes birth and death. The wind blows because it is scared of him. The sun heats because it is scared of him. The god [1150] showers down because he is scared of him. The heavenly

bodies shine because they are scared of him. The trees, creepers and herbs are scared of him and therefore bear flowers and fruits at the right times. The rivers flow because they are scared of him and that is also the reason why the ocean does not overflow. The fire burns and the earth, with its mountains, is not submerged because of fear of him. It is because of his rules that the sky grants habitation for creatures that breathe. It is because of him that Mahat, surrounded by the seven sheaths, expands its body into the worlds. The gods who are responsible for the gunas revere him and are scared of him when they undertake creation. Depending on the yuga, when the mobile and the immobile undertake their tasks, they are under his subjugation. He is without end, but he brings about the end. He is time. He is without beginning, but he is the undecaying one who created the beginning. He causes people to be born through their fathers and mothers. He is the one who kills. He is death, the one who brings about an end.'"'

Chapter 3(30)

"'Kapila said, 'Indeed, people do not know about his great strength, though they are at the mercy of time, just as a mass of clouds does not know about the strength of the wind that carries it away. For the sake of happiness, whatever one obtains with a great deal of difficulty, is destroyed by the illustrious one and a man sorrows on this account. This body, and everything associated with it, is temporary. However, out of delusion, an evil-minded person takes them and homes, fields and riches to be permanent. A living being finds satisfaction as whatever kind of species it is born in, and is never disgusted. Even if the body is in hell, a man does not want to give it up. Confounded by the maya of the god, he finds satisfaction in that existence in hell. With deep-rooted affection in his heart for himself, his wife, his children, his houses, his animals, his riches and his relatives, he takes himself to be extremely fortunate. In an attempt to maintain these, all the limbs burn with anxiety. The foolish person, evil in his intentions, incessantly performs wicked acts. The senses are agitated by the false charms of

wicked women. He takes delight in talking to them in private and in the sweet words of children. Attentively engaged in the secret [1151] dharma of a householder, he faces a lot of misery. The householder acts so as to counter misery and takes this to be joy. He obtains a great deal of wealth by causing violence here and there. He himself eats only what is left after his dependents have eaten and heads downwards. [1152] In trying to subsist, his attempts are repeatedly frustrated. Overcome by greed, he is ruined and desires the wealth of others. He is unable to sustain his family. He is unfortunate and his efforts are futile. He is without riches and miserable. The evil-minded person grieves and sighs. In this way, seeing that he is unable to support his dependents, his wife and the others no longer respect him, as they used to do earlier. It is like the attitude of a farmer towards an old bull. Even then, no disgust is generated in him. About to die, he is maintained by his own dependents. He is deformed because of old age and in this way, in his home, he approaches death. He is neglected and eats like a dog in the house. Suffering from disease and indigestion, he eats little and his movements become limited. Because of the pressure of the air, his eyeballs bulge. His glands become obstructed because of phlegm. He coughs and finds it difficult to breathe. There is a gurgling sound in his throat. He lies down, surrounded by his grieving relatives. Having come under the subjugation of the noose of time, even when he is spoken to, he does not reply. In this way, having indulged in the unrestrained senses in an attempt to sustain his family, he dies in pain and not without consciousness, with the relatives weeping. Two terrible messengers of Yama arrive and their eyes are full of rage. On seeing them, his heart is terrified and he releases urine and excrement. They forcibly tie a rope around his neck and imprison him [1153] in a body, so that pain can be caused. Like a convict being punished by the king's soldiers, he is dragged a long distance away. When he is conveyed in this way, his heart is shattered by the threats and he trembles. Dogs devour him along the way and, afflicted, he remembers his own sins. He suffers from hunger and thirst. Along the path, he is scorched by hot sand, the sun, forest conflagrations and wind. He is severely struck on the back with whips. Without rest and water, he is unable to move. Exhausted, he falls down here and

there, unconscious, but raises himself again. Along that evil path, he is swiftly conveyed to Yama's abode. Suffering, in two or three muhurtas he is conveyed a distance of ninety-nine thousand yojanas [1154] and reaches there. He is surrounded by blazing torches and his body is set on fire. He is sometimes made to cut up his own flesh and eat it, or get it eaten by others. In Yama's abode, while he is still alive, his entrails are torn out by dogs and vultures. He is tormented by the bites of snakes, scorpions, gnats and other such things. His limbs are chopped off. Elephants and other such animals crush him. He is hurled down from the peaks of mountains. He is imprisoned inside the water, or in caves. Whether a man or a woman, the person suffers pain in hells known as tamisra, andha-tamisra, *rourava* and others and also those constructed for people who indulge in illicit relations. O mother! It is said that heaven and hell are on this earth. The pain of hell is also noticed in this world. In this way, he may have maintained his family and filled his stomach. However, after death, he gives up both his family and his body and enjoys these kinds of fruits. After having given up his own body, he enters the darkness alone. The sin of injury he has caused to creatures is the only thing that sustains him then. It is because of destiny that a man obtains and enjoys this defilement in hell, having maintained his family. Having lost his riches, he is like a person who is afflicted. A person who is eager to maintain his family only through adharma, obtains his ultimate state of darkness in andha-tamisra. Headed downwards and born as a subhuman species, he goes through many kinds of afflictions. As he gradually passes through these, he again obtains an auspicious birth.' [1155]

Chapter 3(31)

"The illustrious one said, 'Depending on his karma, a living being obtains a body under the supervision of the god. Using a particle of a man's semen, he enters the womb of a woman. The mixing [1156] takes place in a single night. A bubble results on the fifth night. In ten days, there is a mass like a jujube berry. [1157] After that, there is flesh and it becomes an egg. The

head is formed in a month. The arms, feet, limbs and other parts of the body develop in two months. Nails, body hair, bones, skin, genital organs and the anus are formed in three months. The seven ingredients [1158] of the body are formed in four months and hunger and thirst develop in the fifth. The placenta provides a covering in the sixth month and there is movement on the right side of the stomach. The ingredients of the body develop from the mother's intake of food and drink. The being lies down in a hollow that is full of urine and excrement, a place where worms breed. All his limbs are delicate and they are constantly wounded from the biting of the worms. Hungry all the time, he loses consciousness because of the suffering. The mother eats excessively bitter, pungent, hot, salty, astringent, acidic and other such food. Touched by these, there is pain in all his limbs. He is enveloped by the embryo. [1159] On the outside, he is covered by the entrails. His head is bent down towards the stomach. His back and neck are arched. Like a bird in a cage, he is unable to move his own limbs. Depending on destiny, he may gain his memory and remember his karma in one hundred earlier births. Remembering these, he sighs deeply. How can one obtain peace in that state? Beginning with the seventh month, consciousness develops. Because of the wind of delivery, he trembles and cannot remain in one place, but is tossed around inside the stomach, like the worms born from the excrement. The living being is terrified and looks for a protector. Surrounded by the seven sheaths, he falteringly prays to the one who has hurled him inside the stomach. The living being says, "I approach and seek protection at the lotus feet of the one who creates the universe with his will. He assumes many kinds of forms and roams around the earth. I go and seek refuge with him, so that he can grant me freedom from fear. Since I was wicked, he is the one who has decided that this kind of destination is appropriate for me. I am in this body made out of five elements, but am actually separate from it. I am falsely covered by the senses and the gunas. I am the atman which is consciousness. The omniscient one is unrestricted in his greatness and I bow down to the being who is beyond Prakriti and Purusha. It is because of his greatness that one is bound down in karma and the gunas. One is suffering pain and is wandering around on this path of samsara.

The memory has been destroyed. Without his great mercy, how can one realize one's true nature? Mobile and immobile objects follow him. Other than that divinity, who can provide me knowledge about the past, the present and the future? Along the trail of karma, the jivatman follows him. We worship him so that the three kinds of torments are countered." He is in another person's body, he is in a hollow inside the body, suffering from the fire in the stomach and immersed in a pool of blood, urine and excrement. His body is severly scorched. He is anxious to emerge and counts the months. Miserable in his intelligence, he asks, "O illustrious one! When will I be released from here? O lord! I am ten months old and have been reduced to this state. I have been made to accept this state because of your mercy. May the protector of the distressed be satisfied with what he has done. Indeed, what can I do for him, except to join my hands in salutation? The jivatman is bound by the seven sheaths and can use his intelligence to perceive and control pleasure and pain in his own body. O ancient being! You have created this. I can see you outside my heart. You appear like a sanctuary. O lord! I am residing here, in an abode that is full of many kinds of miseries. I do not wish to leave this womb and immerse myself in the well of ignorance outside. If one goes there, one is captured by the divine one's maya. Indeed, with that false intelligence, one circles around in the cycle of birth and death. Therefore, let this agitation be over. With my atman as a well-wisher, I will quickly deliver myself from this darkness. Now that I have obtained Vishnu's feet, let this hardship of many holes [1160] not be something I have to face again." After ten months in the womb, the learned one makes up his mind in this way. However, when he is in this act of praising, the wind of delivery at the time of birth immediately propels him downwards. He is violently pushed by the wind, afflicted and his head downwards. He emerges with difficulty and finds it hard to breathe. He loses his memory. He falls down on the ground, mixed with blood and writhes around like a worm in the excrement. With his knowledge lost, he obtains a perverse state and cries. He is dependent on others. He is nurtured by others, who do not know his desires. Even if he is given something he does not want, he is unable to refuse. The being is made to lie down on an unclean

bed, defiled by those who are born from sweat. [1161] He is incapable of scratching his limbs. He cannot sit, arise or move. He has been deprived of his knowledge. His delicate skin is bitten by gnats, mosquitoes and other bugs, like worms biting other worms. In this way, he suffers from miseries in childhood and as a boy. Unable to obtain what he desires, he is overwhelmed by grief. Because of his ignorance, his rage is ignited. As his body grows, so do his pride and anger. Driven by desire, he fights with others who are driven by desire and ensures his own destruction. The body is made out of five elements. However, he is perpetually ignorant about the body. He accepts notions of "I" and "mine" and acts in accordance with this wicked intelligence. He performs acts for the body and is bound in the cycle of birth and death. Because of his ignorance, he is tied down in the bondage of action. He gives himself hardships that follow him. He is repeatedly brought back to the wicked path and acts for the sake of the penis and the stomach. Having resorted to these, the being finds delight and enters darkness again, as earlier. Because of association with the wicked, truth, purity, compassion, silence, intelligence, prosperity, modesty, fame, forgiveness, fortitude, self-restraint and fortune are destroyed. One must not associate with disturbed, foolish and wicked people who have separated themselves from their atmans. They are as inauspicious as domesticated deer that women play with. There is no confusion or bondage from attachment to something that is as great as the attachment towards women, or association with men who are thus attached. At the sight of his own daughter, Prajapati [1162] was smitten by her beauty. When she assumed the form of a doe, he shamelessly assumed the form of a buck and ran after her. Among all kinds of living beings that have been created by the creator, and those created thereafter, there is no man who is not attracted to the maya of a woman, the rishi Narayana being the only exception. Behold my maya in the form of a woman, whereby I have conquered the directions. A mere arching of her eyebrows can make people follow her tracks. If one aspires to reach the ultimate shore of yoga, one must never associate with a woman. By serving me, one obtains realization of the atman. However, it is said that she is the gate to hell. A woman has been fashioned by the god and her maya ap-

proaches slowly. One must look upon her as death towards one's own self, like a pit that is covered by grass. In an earlier life, if one was attached to women, one obtains the state of being a woman. Because of my maya she thinks that her husband is approaching and that she has obtained riches, offspring and a house from him. She should know that her husband, offspring, home and her own self are the result of destiny and that they are like the singing of a hunter when he summons a deer to its death. Because of the body, [1163] the jivatman wanders around, from one world to another. Enjoying the fruits, a man incessantly undertakes action. The jivatman follows the body, consisting of the elements, the senses and the mind. When these come to an end, the body dies. But is manifested again in birth. The gross body perceives objects. When it is incapable of perceiving objects, this is said to be panchatva. Because of the sense of "I", when the objects can be perceived again, this is said to be birth. The eyes can perceive the forms of objects. However, when they cannot perceive objects, this means that the eyes are incapable of seeing. Neither the eyes, nor the seer, can see. [1164] A steadfast person knows this progress of the jivatman and is not terrified, miserable or scared. He roams around in this world without any attachment. Through yoga and intelligence, he possesses the proper insight and is full of non-attachment. In this world that is fashioned by maya, he roams around in his body.'"'

Chapter 3(32)

"'Kapila said, 'A person who is in the householder stage performs the dharma meant for those who live in homes. He enjoys his own dharma of kama and artha and repeatedly performs the same tasks. He is confused by desire and withdraws from the dharma of devotion to the illustrious one. Full of devotion, he performs sacrifices and rites for the gods and the ancestors. The man's mind is full of devotion and he performs the vows for the gods and the ancestors. He goes to the world of the moon and drinks soma, but returns again. When the worlds head towards destruction and Hari, seat-

ed on Ananta, lies down on the couch made out of the Indra among serpents, the worlds meant for householders are also destroyed. Those who are intelligent do not enjoy their own dharma for the sake of kama and artha. They are without attachment and give up their tasks. [1165] They are tranquil and pure in their intelligence. They constantly follow the dharma of nivritti. They are without a sense of ownership and without ahamkara. They purify their intelligence through sattva and engage in their own dharma. Through the gate of the sun, they go to the Purusha whose face is in every direction. He is the lord of this world and the next. He is the one who causes the creation and destruction of nature. Those who worship Brahma, taking him to be the supreme, reside in his supreme world for two parardhas. After this, there is destruction. [1166] Having experienced a period of two parardhas, characterized by the three gunas, the supreme Svayambhu enters the immutable, desiring to dissolve the earth, water, fire, wind, space, the mind, the senses, the objects of the senses and the elements that cover them. There are yogis who have controlled their breath of life and minds and are non-attached. Along with Brahma, they enter the immortal, ancient and illustrious Purusha. However, despite reaching that supreme state, they have not lost their ahamkara. [1167] He has made his abode in the lotus hearts of all living beings. O beautiful one! Therefore, with devotion, go and seek refuge with the one whose glories you have heard about. He [1168] is the creator of mobile and immobile objects. The Vedas are in him. Along with the rishis, the Kumaras and the others are lords of yoga and have propounded the path of success through yoga. They are non-attached in their deeds. However, even when they reach the supreme brahman, the Purusha who is a bull among Purushas, because of the gunas, they have a sense of ownership and touched by this ahamkara, have a sense of difference. [1169] When the lord of time decides that it is time, he [1170] is born again. Because of the transformation in the gunas, he is born and creates again, as earlier. Because of the dharma they followed, they [1171] also enjoy supreme prosperity. However, because of the transformation in the gunas, they are born again. In this world, there are those whose minds are attached to action. They always faithfully perform all the tasks that are not prohibited. Because of rajas,

their minds are anxious. They have not been able to conquer their senses and their souls are full of desire. As householders, they have wishes and every day, perform sacrifices for the ancestors. These men serve the three objectives of life [1172] and their intelligence turns away from Hari's accounts, though accounts about the great prowess of Madhu's slayer are worth hearing about. Those who cast aside the nectar-like accounts of Achyuta, and hear wicked accounts instead, are like those who eat excrement and are indeed condemned by fate. They follow the southern path of the sun [1173] and go to the world of the ancestors. They are born as offspring of their own offspring [1174] and perform all the rites, ending with the cremation ground. When the merit of good deeds is exhausted, they return again to this world. Urged by destiny, with their prosperity over and helpless, they fall again. Therefore, in every possible way, you must worship Parameshthi. His lotus feet deserve to be worshipped. With faith, seek refuge in his qualities. If devotion to Vasudeva is practised through bhakti yoga, non-attachment and knowledge that leads to insight about the brahman are swiftly generated. Such a person's mind is indifferent towards material objects and the workings of the senses. He does not discriminate between what is agreeable and what is disagreeable. He sees the atman in his own atman. He is without attachment and impartial in his vision. He does not think anything is to be accepted or rejected, but considers the supreme and elevated state. The supreme brahman is only knowledge, described as the paramatman, the lord and Purusha. The illustrious one is one, but is perceived in different ways. Through yoga, the yogi seeks the objective of complete non-attachment and desires to achieve this. The brahman is one and is nirguna. However, those who are averse to knowledge use their senses and it appears in the form of diverse objects, such as sound and other things. But this is because of confusion. The self-ruling Mahat appears as three kinds of ahamkara, the five elements and the eleven. [1175] The entire universe originated in the cosmic egg. This can be realized through faith, devotion, constant practice of yoga, meditation, disassociation and non-attachment. O lady who is my senior! I have thus spoken about the knowledge that enables realization of the brahman. Through this, one understands the truth about Purusha and Prakriti.

Jnana yoga [1176] is about the nirguna and there are the attributes of bhakti towards me. Both have the same objective, expressed as realization of the illustrious one. The same object can have many attributes and different senses perceive these as different doors. In the same way, the single illustrious one is perceived in different ways in paths mentioned by different sacred texts. Religious rites, sacrifices, donations, austerities, studying, inquiry, conquest of the mind and the senses, renunciation of deeds, the different limbs of yoga, bhakti yoga, both kinds of dharma, *pravritti* and nivritti, [1177] understanding the truth about the atman and firm non-attachment—these are means of realizing the self-luminous and illustrious one, in saguna and nirguna forms. I have described the nature of the four kinds of bhakti yoga [1178] and about the imperceptible movement of time, which runs inside all living beings. I have spoken about the external and material appearance of the jivatman, caused by ignorance and karma. O dear one! When the atman enters these, it is unable to perceive its own progress. If a person is wicked or insolent, this instruction should never be explained to him, nor to one who is dumb, ill-behaved, or one who falsely flies the flag of dharma. It should not be instructed to a person who is greedy or one whose mind is attached to the house, nor to a person who is not a devotee, or a hater of my devotees. It should be taught to one who is faithful, devoted, humble, without a sense of envy and to a person who is friendly towards all creatures and disposed towards serving. It should be instructed to someone who is non-attached, internally and externally, and to one who is tranquil in his mind, to one who is without envy, is pure and to one who regards me as the dearest of loved ones. O mother! If a man listens to this faithfully, with his mind fixed on me, he certainly obtains my state.’”’

Chapter 3(33)

‘Maitreya said, “Devahuti, Kardama’s beloved wife and Kapila’s mother, heard his words. She was freed from the veil of delusion. She bowed down

before the one who had prepared the ground for obtaining success, by composing the various subjects on tattvas. [1179] She praised him.

‘“Devahuti said, ‘You were lying down inside the water. You are the seed behind the manifestation of everything—the elements, the senses, the objects of the senses, the mind and the flow of the gunas. Aja, born from the lotus in your stomach, himself meditated on you. You have divided your energy and ensured this flow of gunas. You have determined the creation of the universe. Your will is behind creation, preservation and destruction. You are the lord in all atmans. You are inconceivable and possess thousands of different kinds of powers. O protector! How did you take birth in my womb? It is in your stomach that everything existed. At the end of the yuga, you lay down on a single banyan leaf. Using your maya, like an infant, you sucked on your toe. O lord! You have assumed a body so that wickedness can decline and so that those who listen to your instructions can prosper. You assumed avataras like those of a boar, so that people can realize their atmans. If one hears your name being chanted, if one remembers it and worships you, even a svapacha is instantly purified and becomes worthy of performing a sacrifice. O illustrious one! Nothing need be said about a person who has seen you. How wonderful it is that even a svapacha is glorified if your name is on the tip of his tongue. Noble ones who take your name must have tormented themselves through austerities, offered oblations, bathed in sacred places and studied the Vedas in earlier lives. You are the brahman, the supreme being. With the mind turned inwards, you are worthy of being meditated upon. Because of your energy, the flow of gunas has vanished. [1180] I bow down before Kapila Vishnu, the store of the Vedas.’”

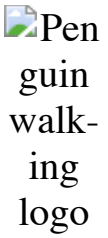
‘Maitreya continued, “The illustrious supreme being, known as Kapila, was thus praised. Devoted to his mother, he addressed his mother in words that were full of deep meaning.

‘“Kapila said, ‘O mother! I have instructed you about a path that is easy to follow. By following this, you will soon reach the supreme state. Have faith in my views, followed by those who know about the brahman. Through this, without any fear, you will reach me. Those who do not know about this head towards death.’”

‘Maitreya continued, “Thus, the illustrious one showed the path of the atman to the virtuous one. His mother obtained knowledge about the brahman. Taking her permission, Kapila left. In that hermitage, which was like a crest of flowers on Sarasvati’s head, she followed the instructions of her son, controlled herself and engaged in yoga. She bathed repeatedly. [1181] Her curly hair became tawny and matted. She dressed herself in rags. Because of her fierce austerities, she became emaciated. Through the yoga of his austerities, Prajapati Kardama had created a home that was unmatched, coveted even by those who rode on vimanas. The couches possessed the complexion of the foam of milk. They were made of ivory and the spreads were made out of gold. The seats were golden and the cushions were pleasant to the touch. The walls were made out of sparkling crystal and encrusted with extremely expensive emeralds. There were glistening lamps made out of jewels and the women were adorned with gems. The beautiful garden in the house possessed many celestial and blossoming trees. Avian couples chirped and intoxicated bees hummed. Lovingly tended to by Kardama, when she entered the lake, full of fragrant lotuses, the followers of the gods sang words of praise. This was a place desired by Akhandala’s [1182] women. But she gave it up. Her face was only slightly distressed, because she was separated from her son. Her husband had left for the forest. Thereafter, her son also left and she was distressed. Even though she knew the truth, she was like an affectionate cow separated from her calf. O child! She meditated on her divine son, Kapila Hari. Hence, soon, she no longer had any attachment for that kind of house. She mediated on the illustrious one’s form and smiling face. She had been told by her son that this could be realized through meditation and all her thoughts were on parts of the body. [1183] Because of the flow of devotion and yoga, non-attachment became strong. Because of proper observation of the rites, knowledge about the brahman was generated. Her mind became pure. She realized the atman, whose face was in every direction. The diverse kinds of maya and gunas vanished. Her intelligence was immersed in the illustrious brahman, who resides in all atmans. She was freed from the misery of the jivatman and all kinds of afflictions disappeared. She achieved nivritti. She was always immersed in

samadhi and was freed from the delusion of the gunas. She no longer remembered herself, just as one doesn't remember what one sees in a dream. Her body was sustained by others. [1184] Hence, she was not emaciated and there was no chance of disease. Though she was covered in filth, she was as radiant as a fire without smoke. Her limbs were full of austerities and yoga. Her hair was dishevelled and she lost her garments. With her intelligence immersed in Vasudeva, she did not realize this and divinities protected her. In this way, following the path instructed by Kapila, she soon obtained the supreme. She obtained the illustrious brahman and attained the state of nirvana. [1185] O brave one! The place where she obtained success is named Siddhapada. It is the most sacred place and is famous in the three worlds. Through yoga, her mortal body was cleansed of all impurities and became a river. O amiable one! It is the best among rivers, conferring siddhis and frequented by the Siddhas. With his mother's permission, the illustrious Kapila, the great yogi, left his father's hermitage and left for the north-eastern direction. He was praised by the Siddhas, the charanas, the gandharvas, the sages and large numbers of apsaras. The ocean offered him honours and a place to reside in. He is immersed in yoga there, praised by the teachers of samkhya. For the deliverance of the three worlds, the self-controlled one is there. O son! O unblemished one! I have told you what you asked about, the sacred conversation between Kapila and Devahuti. If one hears this, or narrates this, about the sage Kapila's secret views on the yoga of the atman, his intelligence becomes fixed on the illustrious one, with Suparna on his standard. He obtains the illustrious one's lotus feet."'

This ends the Third Skandha.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Fourth Skandha

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Chapter 4(2): 35 shlokas
Chapter 4(3): 25 shlokas
Chapter 4(4): 34 shlokas
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Chapter 4(9): 68 shlokas
Chapter 4(10): 30 shlokas
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Chapter 4(23): 39 shlokas
Chapter 4(24): 80 shlokas
Chapter 4(25): 62 shlokas
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Chapter 4(27): 30 shlokas
Chapter 4(28): 65 shlokas
Chapter 4(29): 87 shlokas
Chapter 4(30): 51 shlokas
Chapter 4(31): 31 shlokas

Chapter 4(1)

'Maitreya said, "Through Shatarupa, Manu had three daughters. They were known as Akuti, Devahuti and Prasuti. Though Akuti had brothers, with Shatarupa's permission, the king bestowed her on Ruchi, on the condition that *putrika dharma* should be followed. [1186] The illustrious Prajapati, Ruchi, was full of the radiance of the brahman, because of his supreme meditation. Through her, he had offspring who were twins. Of these, the male was Vishnu himself, the one who assumes the form of a sacrifice. The female was Dakshina. [1187] She was a portion of the goddess of riches, the one who is never separated. [1188] Svayambhu Manu brought his daughter's son, full of great beauty, to his own home, while Ruchi happily accepted Dakshina. She desired him [1189] and the illustrious Yajna, the lord of sacrifices, married her. Satisfied with her, he had twelve sons through her. These twelve were Tosha, Pratosha, Santosha, Bhadra, Shanti, Idaspati, Idhma, Kavi, Vibhu, Svahna, Sudeva and Rochana. During Svayambhuva manvantara, they were the gods, named Tushitas. Marichi and the others were the rishis and Yajna was the lord of the large number of gods. [1190] Manu's two sons, Priyavrata and Uttanapada, were greatly energetic. During that period, their sons, grandsons through sons, grandsons through daughters and subsequent descendants proliferated. O son! Manu bestowed his daughter, Devahuti, on Kardama. I have already spoken to you about them and you have heard it. The illustrious Manu bestowed Prasuti on Daksha, Brahma's son. The large number of his descendants spread throughout the three worlds. I have already told you about Kardama's nine daughters, who became the wives of brahmana rishis. I will now tell you about their sons and grand-

sons. Listen to me. Kardama's daughter, Kala, was Marichi's wife and she had children known as Kashyapa and Purniman. Their descendants filled the world. O scorcher of enemies! Purniman's sons were Viraja and Vishvaga. His [1191] daughter, Devakulya, washed Hari's feet and became the celestial river. [1192] Anasuya, Atri's wife, gave birth to three extremely famous sons—Datta, Durvasa and Soma. They were born from the atman, Isha and Brahma." [1193]

'Vidura asked, "What was the reason for these best among the gods, the cause of creation, preservation and destruction, to be born in Atri's house? O preceptor! They must have been born because they desired to do something. Please tell me."

'Maitreya replied, "Atri, supreme among those who knew about the brahman, was urged by Brahma to create. With his wife, he went to the kulachala Riksha and started to perform austerities. [1194] There were clusters of *palasha* and ashoka flowers in the groves there. In every direction, there was the sound of water flowing along River Nirvindhya. [1195] For one hundred years, the sage controlled his mind and engaged in pranayama. He stood on one foot and was without the opposite pair of sentiments. He survived on air. He thought, 'O lord of the universe! I seek refuge with you. Please grant me a son who is exactly like you.' The three worlds were scorched. Because of the pranayama, a fire emerged from the sage's head and the three [1196] witnessed its powers. The three, whose fame was praised by apsaras, sages, gandharvas, Siddhas, vidyadharas and serpents, went to the hermitage. The sage's mind was illuminated by their simultaneous appearance. On seeing the bulls among the gods, he stood up on that one leg. He prostrated himself on the ground before the ones who should be worshipped, like a rod, and with his hands joined in salutation. They were respectively on a bull, a swan and Suparna, [1197] and had their own respective signs. Their glances were favourable and their smiling faces were satisfied. Dazzled by their radiance, the sage closed his eyes. His mind was fixed on them and his hands were joined in salutation. In gentle words, he prayed to those who were the greatest in the worlds. Atri said, 'You have divided up the task of the creation, the preservation and the destruction of the universe.

Depending on the yuga, you use the attributes of maya to assume different forms. O Brahma, Vishnu and Girisha! I bow down before you. You are the ones who have come here because I have invoked you. For the sake of a son, I used different methods to concentrate on the single illustrious one. It is a great surprise to me that all of you have come here. It is impossible for the minds of embodied beings to perceive you. Show me your favours and tell me about this.' O lord! Hearing his words, those bulls among the gods laughed. In gentle words, they replied to the rishi. The gods said, 'O brahmana! It shall be as you have desired it and not contrary to it. You are right in your determination. We are the one you have meditated upon. O dear one! O beloved one! Therefore, our portions will be born as your sons and they will be famous in the worlds. They will also extend your fame.' Having granted the desired boon, the lords of the gods, who had been worshipped properly, departed while the couple looked on. Soma was born from Brahma's portion, Datta, who knew about yoga, from Vishnu and Durvasa from Shankara's portion. Now hear about the offspring of Angiras. Shraddha, Angiras's wife, had four daughters—Sinivali, Kuhu, Raka and Anumati as the fourth. [1198] He also had two other sons, famous during the Svarochisha manvantara—Utathya, who was the illustrious one himself, and Brihaspati, who knew about the brahman. Through his wife Havirbhu, Pulastya had a son named Agastya, who used to be Daharagni [1199] in another birth, and the great ascetic, Vishrava. Through him and Idavida, [1200] were born the sons Kubera, the god who was the lord of the yakshas, Ravana, Kumbhakarna and Vibhishana, through another wife. [1201] O immensely intelligent one! The virtuous Gati, Pulaha's wife, had three sons—Karmashreshtha, Variyan and Sahishnu. Kratu's wife, Kriya, gave birth to the valakhilya rishis. There were sixty thousand of them and they blazed with the energy of the brahman. O scorcher of enemies! Through Urja, [1202] Vasishtha had seven unblemished sons who were brahmana rishis, Chitraketu being the foremost. They were Chitraketu, Surochi, Viraja, Mitra, Ulbana, Vasubhridyan and Dyuman. Through another wife, his sons were Shakti and the others. Chitti, Atharvan's wife, obtained a son who was firm in his vows. He was Dadhichi or Ashvashira. Now hear from me about Bhrigu's

lineage. Through his wife, Khyati, the immensely fortunate Bhrigu had two sons named Dhatri and Vidhatri. He also had a daughter, Shri, who was devoted to the illustrious one. Meru bestowed his daughters, Ayati and Niyati, on these two sons and Mrikanda and Prana were born from them. [1203] Markandeya was Mrikanda's son and the sage Vedashira was Prana's son. Kavi, from the Bhrigu lineage, had the illustrious Ushanas [1204] as a son. O Kshatta! All these sages populated the world with their offspring. I have spoken to you about Kardama's descendants through his daughters. If one faithfully listens to this account, all great sins are instantly destroyed. Daksha, Aja's son, [1205] married Prasuti, Manu's daughter. Through her, he had sixteen daughters whose eyes were unblemished. The lord bestowed thirteen of these on Dharma and one on Agni. One was bestowed on all the ancestors combined. One was bestowed on Bhava, [1206] who removes the afflictions of the world. Shraddha, Maitri, Daya, Shanti, Tushti, Pushti, Kriya, Unnati, Buddhi, Medha, Titiksha, Hri and Murti—these were Dharma's wives. Shraddha's son was Shubha, Maitri's was Prasada, Daya's was Abhaya, Shanti's was Sukha, Tushti's was Muda, Pushti's was Smaya, Kriya's was Yoga, Unnati's was Darpa, Buddhi's was Artha, Medha's was Smriti, Titiksha's was Kshema and Murti's was Prashraya. Murti, a store of all the qualities, also gave birth to the two rishis, Nara and Narayana. When these two were born, the universe was filled with great delight. The minds, directions, winds, rivers and mountains were pleased. Celestial trumpets were sounded and showers of flowers rained down. The sages uttered words of praise. Gandharvas and kinnaras sang words of praise. Divine women danced and there were excellent auspicious signs. All the gods, Brahma and the others, assembled and uttered words of praise. The gods said, 'He has fashioned everything with his own maya, just as all these forms have appeared in the sky. He has now appeared in the forms of the rishis in Dharma's house. We bow down to the supreme Purusha. He is the one who is responsible for creation, calamities and destruction. He has used sattva to create the large number of gods and he can be perceived through the tattvas. His merciful glances are full of compassion and surpass the lotus, the unblemished abode of Shri.' O son! In this way, the illustrious one was praised

by the large number of gods. Having been worshipped and having glanced favourably at them, they left for Gandhamadana. Those two illustrious ones manifested themselves as Hari's portions. For the sake of reducing the earth's burden, they were born as the two Krishnas, the extenders of the Yadu and Kuru lineages. [1207] Through his wife, Svaha, Agni had three sons —Pavaka, Pavamana and Shuchi. They preside over the fire and subsist on the oblations that are offered. Through them, Agni had forty-five descendants. Thus, including the grandfather and the fathers, there are forty-nine. Those who know about the brahman offer oblations into the fire in their names. These divinities of the fire are the objective in *agneya* rites and sacrifices. The ancestors are Agnishvatta, Barhishad, Soumya and Ajyapa. [1208] Some receive oblations through the sacrificial fire, others without the sacrificial fire. Their common wife is Svadha, Daksha's daughter. The maiden who was bestowed on them [1209] had two daughters, Vayuna and Dharini. Both of them were knowledgeable about the brahman and were accomplished in jnana and vijnana. Bhava's wife was Sati and she followed the god Bhava. However, she could not obtain a son who was like him in qualities and conduct. Her father was against the innocent Bhava and in rage, while she was still young, she engaged in yoga and gave up her body."'

Chapter 4(2)

'Vidura asked, "Bhava was best among those who possessed good conduct and Daksha was affectionate towards his daughter. Why did he hate him and neglect his own daughter, Sati? He is the preceptor of mobile and immobile objects. He shows no enmity and is tranquil in his attitude. He is satisfied within himself. He is a great divinity to the world. Why did he hate him? O brahmana! Tell me about the reason for the enmity between the father-in-law and son-in-law, which led Sati to give up her life, something that is very difficult to give up."

'Maitreya replied, "In ancient times, the creators of the universe [1210] performed a sacrifice where all the supreme rishis assembled. All the large

number of immortals, along with their followers, and the sages, with their sacrificial fires, went there. The rishis saw him [1211] enter that great assembly, blazing like the rays of the sun. His radiance dispelled the darkness. Their senses were overwhelmed and those who were at the assembly, including the sacrificial fires, arose from their seats. The sole exceptions were Virinchi and Sharva. [1212] The illustrious Daksha was properly honoured by the lords of the assembly. He bowed down before Aja, the preceptor of the worlds, and taking his permission, sat down. He saw that Mrida [1213] was already seated and did not show him respect. Unable to tolerate this, he looked at him with an adverse glance in his eyes, as if to burn him down. He said, 'O brahmana rishis, gods and sacrificial fires! Listen to me. I am speaking about virtuous conduct and this is not because of ignorance or envy. This one is shameless and has diminished the fame of the guardians of the worlds. He has defiled and deviated from the path followed by those who are virtuous in conduct. Since he has accepted my daughter, he is like my disciple. In front of brahmanas and the sacrificial fire, behaving like a virtuous person, he accepted the hand of my daughter, who is like Savitri. His eyes are like those of a monkey, but he accepted the hand of someone who has the eyes of a fawn. Though I deserved it, he did not stand up and honour me. Nor did he address me with appropriate words. He does not follow the rites. He is impure. He is insolent and violates the norms. I bestowed this child on him unwillingly, like conferring sacred words [1214] on a shudra. He resides with terrible pretas. [1215] He is surrounded by large numbers of pretas and bhutas. He wanders around naked, like one who is mad. His hair is dishevelled. Sometimes, he laughs. And sometimes, he cries. He bathes himself in the ash from cremation grounds. He garlands himself with skulls and bones from the dead bodies of men. He is spoken of as Shiva, but is not Shiva. [1216] He is mad and is loved by people who are mad. He is the lord of large numbers of pramathas and those who have immersed themselves only in tamas. He is the lord of those who are crazy. He destroys purity and is evil in his heart. Urged by Parameshthi, [1217] I bestowed this virtuous one on him.' Daksha censured Girisha, who sat quietly, in his way.

‘“He then touched water and started to angrily curse him. ‘This Bhava is worst among the large number of gods. When there are sacrifices to the gods, the gods, Indra, Upendra and the others, obtain their shares. But he will not get a share.’ The foremost among those who were at the assembly tried to restrain him. However, Daksha invoked this curse on the lord of the mountains. O Kouravya! With increasing intolerance, he left and went to his own residence. Nandishvara, foremost among those who followed Girisha, got to know about his curse and he became blind with rage. He invoked a terrible curse on Daksha and on the brahmanas who had approved the words spoken against Shiva. ‘The illustrious one does not bear enmity towards anyone. Therefore, if any mortal person hates him, his insight will be coloured by differentiation and he will not realize the truth. He will be addicted to the deceitful dharma of a householder and will desire to engage in ordinary sensual pleasures. His intelligence will be lost in what is said about the Vedas and he will engage in tasks for the sake of the fruits. Daksha is an animal. He has forgotten the nature of the atman and has accepted the body to be supreme. He will be excessively addicted to women and will soon have the head of a goat. His knowledge and intelligence are clouded by ignorance. He is dumb and thinks that everything is about rites. Those who follow him and disrespect Sharva will circle around in samsara. Those who hate Hara will be attracted to the flowery words of the sacred texts and will repeatedly churn those fragrant scents. However, they will be confounded and will not be able to churn their own atmans. The brahmanas will eat everything. They will resort to learning, austerities and vows only for the sake of maintaining themselves. They will roam around and beg in this world, seeking wealth and the gratification of the senses in their bodies.’ On hearing the words invoking a curse on the lineage of brahmanas, Bhrigu invoked a counter-curse. Like Brahma’s staff, this was impossible to violate. ‘If a person adopts Bhava’s vows, or follows those who do so, that person will be a heretic. [1218] His path will be contrary to the virtuous one. He will lose all purity. His intelligence will be foolish. His hair will be matted and he will decorate himself with ashes and bones. He will consecrate himself for worshipping Shiva and *sura* and *asava* will be his divinities. [1219] Since

you have censured the Vedas and brahmanas and the ordinances meant to direct men, you have resorted to the way of heretics. This [1220] is the eternal and auspicious path for the worlds. It has been followed earlier and Janardana has laid down the yardstick for it. This is the eternal and virtuous path for attaining the pure and supreme brahman. By condemning it, you will become a heretic. For them, the king of the bhutas is the divinity.' When Bhrigu was uttering this curse, the illustrious Bhava, somewhat distressed in his mind, left the place, along with his followers. The creators of the worlds continued with the sacrifice, which lasted for one thousand years. O great archer! At this, the bull, Hari, was worshipped. After this, they bathed at the confluence of the Ganga and the Yamuna. Thus purifying themselves, all of them returned to their own abodes, where they had come from."'

Chapter 4(3)

'Maitreya said, "In this way, the enmity between the son-in-law and the father-in-law constantly continued for an extremely long period of time. Brahma Parameshthi instated Daksha as lord over all the Prajapatis and he became conceited. He disregarded those who knew about the the state of the brahman [1221] and performed a vajapeya sacrifice. After this, he started an excellent sacrifice known as *brihaspati-sava*. At this, all the brahmana rishis, all the divine rishis and the ancestors and the gods were welcomed with auspicious benedictions, and along with the husbands the wives also came. While travelling through the sky, they conversed about this. Thus, the goddess Sati, Daksha's daughter, came to know about the great festivities on the occasion of her father's sacrifice. All of them, the women of the minor divinities, were headed there from all the directions. With golden necklaces and excellent garments, they were proceeding in their vimanas, along with their husbands. With polished earrings and beautiful eyes, they passed above her own residence. On seeing this, she anxiously went to her husband, the lord of the bhutas, and spoke to him. Sati said, 'Prajapati, your father-in-law, has now started great festivities in connection with a sacrifice.

O beloved! The gods are going there. If you so desire, let us also go there. Wishing to meet their well-wishers, I am certain that my sisters are also going there, along with their husbands. With you, I also wish to receive the presents that will be given there. My sisters are respected by their husbands. My mother's sisters and my beloved mother will be there. O Mrida! My mind is anxious to meet them and see the flags raised by the maharshis at the sacrifice there. O Aja! [1222] Through your own maya, you have manifested everything, consisting of the three gunas. But I am an ordinary woman who does not know about the truth. O Bhava! I am miserable and wish to see the place where I was born. O one without birth! Behold those other women proceeding in large numbers, ornamented and decorated, and with their husbands and friends. O Shitikantha! [1223] They are proceeding through the sky in the vimanas, like a flock of white swans that are calling. O noble god! After hearing about a festival in her father's house, how can the body of a daughter not be agitated? Even if not invited, people go to the houses of their well-wishers, husbands, preceptors and fathers. O immortal one! I desire this boon from you. O lord! You should show me this compassion. I am located in half of your own self and you possess unrestricted insight. I wish that you should show me this kindness.' The lord of the mountain was thus addressed by his beloved.

'"Affectionate towards his well-wishers, he laughed and replied. However, he remembered the wicked and malicious words that pierced the inner organs, uttered in front of the creators of the worlds. The illustrious one replied, 'O beautiful one! What you have spoken is indeed true. Even if uninvited, one should go to one's relatives, as long as their outlook is not tainted by an intent to find fault. Anger and arrogance can be stronger than relationships. Learning, austerities, wealth, physical beauty, youth and lineage are six good qualities for the virtuous, but not for those who are perverse and wicked. Because of their arrogance, they cannot see the superiority of others. One should disregard such relatives. If one does not wish to be disturbed, one should not go to their houses. They will look upon visitors with a crooked intelligence. Their eyebrows will be furrowed and their eyes will be intolerant. If a person is hurt by the stone-headed arrows of enemies,

one is not hurt as much as one is by the wicked words spoken by a relative who is crooked in intelligence. One then lies down, afflicted in all one's limbs, and with one's heart grieving. With the inner organs suffering, one is tormented day and night. O one with the beautiful eyebrows! It is evident that amongst Prajapati's daughters, you are loved because of your good behaviour. But it is my view that because of your relationship with me, about which he repents, you will receive no honour from your father. If the heart burns with wickedness and if the senses are afflicted at the prosperity of those who possess the intelligence to behold the Purusha, because of one's own inability, one hates people who can use their energy to rise to the supreme state, just as asuras hate Hari. O slender-waisted one! Mutual rising up, welcoming and obeisance is indeed recommended for the virtuous. However, wise people who possess the intelligence only do it for the one who is inside all hearts, and not for those who take pride in the body. He is pure sattva and is spoken of as Vasudeva. In sattva, the illustrious Purusha, Vasudeva, is manifested in his unveiled form. I think it is proper that I should bow down to Adhokshaja. That being the case, you should not look at Daksha and those who follow him, even though he gave you your body. Daksha is envious of me. O one with the beautiful thighs! At the sacrifice of the creators of the universe, even though I was innocent, he uttered vile words against me. If you disregard my words and go there, I do not think anything good will come out of it. When a respected person is insulted by one's own relatives, it is described as instant death.'"'

Chapter 4(4)

'Maitreya said, "After saying this, Shankara stopped. In either case, [1224] he thought about the possibility of his wife's death. She wished to see her well-wishers, but was uncertain. She left, but returned to Bhava. She was caught in two minds. She was miserable that she would be prevented from seeing her well-wishers. Because of her affection, she wept. She was distressed and tears began to flow. She glanced towards the unmatched Bhava

and, trembling, glanced at him in rage, as if she would burn him down. With her heart shattered by sorrow and rage, Sati sighed and left him. Her feminine nature made her lose her judgement. She abandoned the beloved and virtuous one, who had affectionately given her half of his body, and went to her father's house. When Sati left alone, thousands of the three-eyed one's followers, the yakshas Maniman and Mada, with their followers, and with the Indra among bulls [1225] at the forefront, swiftly followed, quick in their valour and without any distress. They made her sit on the Indra among bulls, who was decorated. There were *sarika*s, [1226] balls, [1227] mirrors, lotus flowers, a white umbrella, whisks and garlands. There was singing and music from drums, conch shells and flutes. The sacrificial arena was ornamented with sounds of the brahman being chanted by large numbers of brahmana rishis. There were gods in every direction. There were sacrificial vessels made out of clay, wood, iron and gold and darbha grass and hides were laid out. She entered. The people were scared of the performer of the sacrifice. [1228] Therefore, when she arrived, no one received and honoured her, with the exception of her sisters and mother. With eyes and throats full of affectionate tears, they respectfully welcomed her and joyfully embraced her. She saw that there was no share of the sacrifice meant for Rudra and that her father had ignored the lord and god. The goddess was herself ignored at the sacrificial assembly. Therefore, she became angry, as if she would burn down the worlds in her rage.

'"The large number of bhutas sprang up. But, using her own energy, she restrained them. In the hearing of the universe, in a voice that stuttered because of her rage, she condemned the one who hated Shiva, the one who had resorted to the path of the smoke. [1229] The illustrious goddess said, 'He is extremely loved by the worlds. Those who possess bodies love him as much as they love themselves. He is in all atmans and is free from enmity. Barring you, who will be envious of him? O brahmana! Barring you, who will search for taints in the virtuous qualities of others? Good people play down small faults and magnify qualities, while the greatest ignore the faults. However, you only find faults. [1230] Among those wicked ones who look upon this inert body as the atman, it is not surprising that there should

be this condemnation of the great. Indeed, this is good, because their own energy is thus diminished by the dust on the feet of those great beings. His deeds are sacred and his commands are inviolate. Even if the two aksharas in his name [1231] are inadvertently uttered by men once, they instantly destroy all sin. Alas! Because you hate Shiva, you have become worse than auspicious. He is a friend to the universe. Like bees, great ones who desire to savour the essence of the brahman seek out his lotus feet in their minds. However, he is the one you hate. You say that Shiva is inauspicious, but others do not think that. His dishevelled hair is matted. He smears himself with ashes from cremation grounds and wears garlands of human skulls. He resides with pishachas. But Brahma and the others touch what has fallen from his feet with their heads. If wicked people vilify the lord, one must block one's ears. If unable to do so, one must leave. He is the one who protects the path of dharma. If men show him disrespect, if one is able, one must forcibly sever those tongues and even give up one's life in the process. You have censured Shitikantha. Therefore, I will not retain this body, which has been obtained from you. It is said that if one is blinded and has imbibed poision ignorantly, it must be vomited out. Great sages find delight in their own selves and do not have to follow the views of what is stated in the Vedas. Just as the paths followed by gods and men are different, one should follow one's own dharma and not criticize others. It is true that karma can be driven by pravritti or nivritti. The signs of both have been described in the Vedas. But the signs of both cannot simultaneously be found in the same agent. However, if a person is immersed in the brahman, he need not undertake either kind of action. O father! You should not be arrogant about your prosperity, this sacrificial arena, or the path of the smoke. Nor should one be satisfied and praise the food from sacrifices, enhancing the body. The signs of what avadhutas obtain are not manifest. Enough of this body, obtained from someone like you, who has injured Hara. Enough is enough. I am ashamed because I was created from a wicked person. Shame on this birth from a vile person who reviles the great. The illustrious one, with the bull on his banner, refers to your gotra and calls me Dakshayani. [1232] This causes great distress to me. I instantly lose my joy and my smiles. I will

give up this inert body that has been obtained from your limbs.' O slayer of enemies! In the sacrificial arena, she spoke to Daksha in this way. She silently sat down on the ground and faced the northern direction. Attired in yellow garments, she touched water. Closing her eyes, she immersed herself in the path of yoga. She controlled her posture and brought equilibrium in her breath of life. [1233] She made udana rise up from the chakra at the navel, [1234] gradually brought it up and used her intelligence to stabilize it near the heart. The unblemished one then raised it up through the throat to in between the eyebrows. Her body repeatedly rested on the lap of the greatest among the great. [1235] Because of her anger at Daksha, the spirited one wished to give it up. She used dharana to generate wind and fire in her body. She thought about the intoxicating lotus feet of her husband, the preceptor of the worlds, and about no one else. Sati saw that all the impurities in her body had been destroyed. That samadhi instantly ignited a blazing fire. On seeing that great and extraordinary sight, extremely great sounds of lamentation arose in the firmament and on earth. 'Alas! Enraged at him, the goddess, loved by the god, has given up her life. Alas! Behold the great disregard by Prajapati, the creator of mobile and immobile objects. Because of that dishonour, his daughter, Sati, has given up her life. The spirited one sought the respect that she deserved. With extreme intolerance in his heart, this one is a hater of the brahman. He will reap great ill repute in the worlds. Because of his crime of hatred towards Purusha, his own daughter prepared to die, but he did not restrain her.' Witnessing Sati's extraordinary act of giving up her own body, people spoke in this way.

'"Her attendants raised their weapons and rushed towards Daksha, intending to kill him. The illustrious Bhrigu saw that they were descending with force. Desiring to kill those who were going to destroy the sacrifice, he used hymns from the Yajur Veda to offer oblations into the *dakshinagni*. [1236] When the adhvaryu offered these oblations, thousands of gods named Ribhus manifested themselves. They were powerful, possessing their energy from the austerities of the soma sacrifice. They raised flaming firebrands as weapons and using their brahmana energy, slaughtered and routed the pramathas and guhyakas in different directions."'

Chapter 4(5)

‘Maitreya said, “From Narada, Bhava got to know that Bhavani [1237] had died because of the dishonour shown by Prajapati and that his own attendants and soldiers had been driven away from the sacrificial arena by the Ribhus. He was filled with great rage. Dhurjati [1238] bit his lips in anger. Rudra rose up violently and laughed loudly. He plucked out a lock from his matted hair, fierce like the fire and blazing like lightning, and flung it down on the ground. An extremely gigantic being arose and he seemed to touch the firmament. [1239] He possessed one thousand arms and was as dark as a cloud. His three eyes blazed like the sun. His teeth were terrible and the hair on his head flamed like the fire. He wore a garland made out of skulls and held up many kinds of weapons. He joined his hands in salutation and asked, ‘O illustrious one! What will I do?’ The lord of the bhutas replied, ‘O Rudra! O soldier! You are my portion and are foremost among my soldiers. Destroy Daksha and his sacrifice.’ Thus commanded by the angry and intolerant lord, he circumambulated the god of the gods. O son! He took himself to be a part of his powers and therefore, able to withstand the greatest. He was followed by Rudra’s attendants, who roared loudly. He himself roared in an extremely terrible voice. He raised his trident, which was capable of even destroying the destroyer of the universe. [1240] With the ornaments on his feet announcing his arrival, he rushed forth.

‘“The officiating priest, the performer of the sacrifice [1241] and those at the assembly saw a storm of dust in the northern direction. ‘What darkness is this? Where has this storm of dust come from?’ The brahmanas and the wives of the brahmanas speculated in this way. ‘The winds are not blowing. Nor can these be bandits, since Prachinabarchi, [1242] whose staff of chastisement is terrible, is still alive. Nor is this the time for cows to be driven home. Where has this dust come from? Is it time for the worlds to head towards destruction?’ The women, with Prasuti [1243] as the foremost, were anxious in their minds. They said, ‘This is a calamity that has been brought about by his sin. While her sisters looked on, the lord of subjects insulted

his innocent daughter, Sati. At the time of destruction, his [1244] matted and dishevelled hair is spread around. He uses his trident to pierce the Indras among elephants who are in charge of the directions. He dances, with his hands, which are like standards, holding up his weapons. He laughs loudly and the thunder of that sound shatters the directions. When he is intolerant, his energy is impossible to withstand. When he is overcome with rage and knits his eyebrows, he is impossible to behold. His terrible teeth scatter the stellar bodies. When the lord is enraged, even Vidhatri [1245] cannot ensure good fortune.' Glancing in agitation, the people uttered many such words. Ominous and fearful portents repeatedly appeared in their thousands, from all sides in the sky and on earth, signifying calamity to Daksha and to themselves.

'"O child! At that time, the great sacrificial arena was attacked by Rudra's attendants. There were dwarves wielding many kinds of weapons. There were others wielding many kinds of weapons and they were brownish and darkish in complexion. Their faces and stomachs were like makaras. O Vidura! They ran around and surrounded the place from all sides. Some shattered the pillars towards the east, others the quarters meant for the wives. Still others devastated the assembly hall, the storehouse for sacrificial offerings, the residence of the performer of the sacrifice and the large kitchen. Some broke the sacrificial vessels, others extinguished the sacrificial fire. Some urinated on the sacrificial pits. Some destroyed the boundaries around the sacrificial altar. Some bound the sages, others threatened their wives. Some seized the gods who were nearby and were trying to run away. Maniman tied up Bhrigu and Virabhadra tied up Prajapati. Chandisha tied up the god Pushan and Nandishvara seized Bhaga. All the officiating priests, all those assembled at the sacrifice and all the residents of heaven saw this. They suffered a great deal from the stones that were hurled at them and fled in different directions. In the middle of the assembly, Bhrigu had laughed, brandishing his beard. [1246] Therefore, the illustrious Bhava [1247] plucked out his beard, while he was using the sacrificial ladle to offer oblations. In rage, the illustrious one flung Bhaga down on the ground and plucked out his eyes, because in the middle of the assembly, he had moved

his eyes and encouraged Daksha while he was cursing. While the great one [1248] was being cursed, Pushan had smiled, displaying his teeth. Therefore, he [1249] extracted his teeth, just as Bala had done to Kalinga. [1250] After this, Tryambaka [1251] sat down on Daksha's chest and tried to sever his head with a sharp-edged weapon. But he was unsuccessful. Hara Pashupati [1252] again tried to sever it with weapons invoked with mantras. However, the skin was tough and couldn't be cut. He was extremely surprised and thought for a long time. The lord of animals [1253] then noticed the way animals were slaughtered on the sacrificial stake. He used this to sever the head from the body of the one performing the sacrifice. [1254] On beholding this deed, the bhutas, pretas and pishachas applauded, while the others lamented the calamity. Full of rage, he then offered the head as an oblation into the dakshinagni. Having burnt down the sacrificial arena, he left for the abode of the guhyakas."' [1255]

Chapter 4(6)

'Maitreya said, "All the large number of gods were defeated by Rudra's soldiers. All their limbs were severed and mangled by spears, lances, swords, maces, bludgeons and clubs. Filled with fear, the officiating priests and those at the assembly went and bowed down before Svayambhu. They told him everything. The illustrious one, born from the lotus, and Narayana, the atman of the universe, had already seen that this would happen. Therefore, they did not go to the sacrifice. Hearing this, the lord said, 'An offence has been perpetrated against a more energetic person. In general, if one does this, one can never obtain peace. You have committed a crime against Bhava. He was entitled to a share in the sacrifice, but you excluded him. With purified hearts, you should go to his lotus feet and seek his favours. He is quickly propitiated. You hope that the sacrifice should be revived. However, if he is angry, the worlds and their guardians will not exist. You should swiftly beg his forgiveness. His heart has been pierced by harsh words and the god has recently lost his beloved. I, Yajna, [1256] you, others, those who

possess material bodies and the sages do not know the true measure of his strength and energy. He is self-dependent. Who but he can think of a means?' Aja instructed the gods in this way.

'"He took them, the ancestors and the Prajapatis with him and left his own residence to go to that of the enemy of Pura. [1257] This was Kailasa, supreme among mountains, and loved by the lord. This is the birthplace of herbs and is enjoyed by Siddhas and others by virtue of their austerities, mantras and yoga. It is always inhabited and surrounded by kinnaras, gandharvas and apsaras. The summits are made out of many kinds of gems and are coloured with diverse kinds of minerals. There are many kinds of trees, creepers and shrubs. It is surrounded by many kinds of animals. There are many sparkling waterfalls. There are diverse kinds of caverns and peaks. It is a place for pleasure and Siddha women sport there, along with their lovers. There are the sounds of peacocks calling. There is the humming of intoxicated and senseless bees. There is the singing of cuckoos and the chirping of birds. Trees that yield every object of desire raise up their lofty branches, like hands, and seem to summon the birds. Elephants seem to make the mountain whirl and the waterfalls seem to make it sing. It is adorned with trees like mandara, parijata, *sarala*, tamala, *shala*, *tala*, *kovidara*, *asana*, arjuna, chuta, kadamba, *nipa*, naga, punnaga, champaka, *patala*, ashoka, bakula, kunda and *kurabaka*. [1258] There were golden-hued lotuses of a species with excellent pollen and the place was decorated with *kubja*s, [1259], *mallika*s [1260] and madhavis. [1261] There were trees like jackfruit, *udumbara*, [1262] *ashvattha*, [1263] *plaksha*, [1264] *nyagrodha*, [1265] fennel plants, birch, herbs, areca nuts, areca nut palms and jambus. There were date palms, hog plum trees, mango trees, chironji trees, [1266] *madhuka*s [1267] and *inguda*s. [1268] There were other kinds of trees and it was bright with bamboos and hollow reeds. There were many kinds of lotuses—*kumuda*s, utpalas and *shatapatra*s. Along the shores of the lakes, full of lotuses, there were the pleasant sounds of flocks of birds singing. There were deer, monkeys, boar, lions, bears, gavayas, [1269] sharabhas, [1270] ruru antelopes, buffaloes and other animals. There were animals with their ears near their entrails, with one leg, with faces like horses, and wolves and musk deer. The sandy shores of the

lakes were beautiful because of clumps of plantain trees. It was surrounded by the Nanda, with the waters rendered sacred because Sati had bathed there. Beholding this mountain of the lord of the mountains, the gods were filled with wonder. There, they saw the beautiful city known as Alaka. There was a grove named Sougandhika [1271] and the lotuses in it had the same name. The two rivers, Nanda and Alakananda, flowed outside the city. They were sanctified by the dust raised from the lotus feet of the one whose feet are tirthas. [1272] O Kshatta! When their desires are exhausted, celestial women descend from their own vehicles and sport there. They immerse themselves and sprinkle their men with water. When they go and bathe there, the fresh kunkuma powder falls from their bodies and turns the water saffron. Even if they are not thirsty, the male and female elephants drink this water. There are hundreds of vimanas, made out of silver, gold and extremely expensive jewels. The wives of sacred people assemble there, making it look like the sky, with clouds tinged with lightning. They passed beyond the city of the lord of the yakshas [1273] and Sougandhika forest, filled with trees that yielded every object of desire and colourful garlands, fruits and leaves. There were many red-necked birds [1274] that sang sweetly and there was the melodious humming of bees. There was the calling of the best among swans and there were beds of lotuses in the waterbodies. The wind bore the scent of yellow sandalwood and agitated the wild elephants, which rubbed themselves against each other. Thoughts of desire again sprung up in the minds of the wives of the sacred people. The lakes had steps that were made out of lapis lazuli and there were garlands of lotuses. It was inhabited by kimpurushas.

‘“After seeing this, not very far away, they saw a banyan tree. It was one hundred yojanas in height. Its branches extended for seventy-five yojanas. The shade always extended in every direction. Therefore, there was no heat and there were no nests. This was a tree where people engaged in great yoga, the refuge of those who sought emancipation. The gods saw Shiva, who had abandoned his rage, seated there, like Death. Tranquil in his form, he was tended to by serene and great Siddhas, Sanandana and the others. He was being worshipped by his friend, the master of the guhyakas and the rak-

shasas. [1275] The lord of intelligence and knowledge was immersed in the path of yoga. Because of his affection and desire to ensure the welfare of the worlds, the friend of the universe was practising it. His signs were those desired by ascetics—ashes, a staff, matted hair and deer hide. The complexion of his body was like that of an evening cloud. The crescent moon dazzled on his forehead. He was seated on a mat of darbha grass and was speaking to Narada, who had asked, about the eternal brahman, while other virtuous ones listened. The left one of his lotus feet was placed on his right thigh and his left hand was on his left knee. [1276] A garland of *rudraksha* beads was around his right wrist and he was seated in *tarka mudra*. [1277] He was in samadhi, in a position of nirvana and being one with the brahman. Girisha had the support of a *yogakaksha*. [1278] The guardians of the world and the sages joined their hands in salutation and bowed down before the one who was the first thinker among all thinkers.

'"He saw that the one who created himself [1279] had come, along with the gods and the lord of the gods. [1280] The one who is worshipped arose and bowed down to them by lowering his head, like the revered Vishnu did to Kashyapa. [1281] After this, the large number of Siddhas and the maharshis who were all around Nilalohita also bowed down. After he had been worshipped, the one who created himself smilingly spoke to the one who had the moon on his forehead. Brahma said, 'I know you as the lord of the universe. You are both the womb and the seed of the universe. You are Shakti and Shiva and the eternal brahman. O illustrious one! Both Shiva and Shakti are your own forms. Just as a spider plays with its web, you create, preserve and destroy the universe. Through Daksha's sacrifice, you have instituted a system for milking sacrifices, so that dharma and artha can be protected. It is you who have determined the ordinances revered by brahmanas who are firm in their vows. O auspicious one! You are the one who expands and confers the world of heaven, and worlds that are superior to heaven, on those who perform auspicious deeds. For those who perform inauspicious deeds, you assign the terrible tamisra. Why should there be anything contrary to this? [1282] Virtuous ones who have completely surrendered themselves to you see you in everything and do not differentiate between beings.

However, there are also beings who differentiate between others and their own selves. Like animals, they generally succumb to rage. [1283] Those who are differentiated in their intelligence perform such acts. Such wicked people always harbour anger in their hearts at the prosperity of others. By using harsh and piercing words, they cause pain to others. There is no need for someone like you to kill them. They have been killed by destiny. There are some who suffer from the insurmountable maya of the one with the lotus in his navel. Touched by this, their intelligence is differentiated. If someone acts in this way, he deserves pity, because this is due to destiny. Virtuous ones show compassion towards such a person and do not use force against him. O one who can see everything! Your intelligence has not been touched by the insurmountable maya of the supreme Purusha. But they have been destroyed by this. Their minds follow the path of action for fruits. O lord! You should show them your own favours. O intelligent one! Let Prajapati's destroyed sacrifice be revived. Inferior priests did not offer you a share, though you deserve a share when the sacrifice is completed. Let the performer of the sacrifice become alive again. Let Bhaga get back his eyes. Let Bhrigu's beard grow back again. As earlier, let Pushan get his teeth back. The bodies of the gods and the officiating priests have been mangled by weapons and stones. O intelligent one! Through your favours, let them quickly recover again. O Rudra! Whatever is left after the sacrifice is over is your share. O destroyer of the sacrifice! From now on, a sacrifice will have a share for Rudra.'"'

Chapter 4(7)

'Maitreya said, "O mighty-armed one! Thus entreated by Aja, Bhava was satisfied. He smiled and said, 'Listen.'

'"Mahadeva said, 'O lord of subjects! I do not take offence, pay any attention, or think about what has been done by the ignorant. They have been overwhelmed by the god's maya. I only wielded the rod of chastisement. Prajapati's head has been burnt down and he will have the head of a he-

goat. Bhaga will see his share of the sacrifice through Mitra's eyes. Pushan will use the teeth of the one who performs the sacrifice to chew and will eat only flour. The gods, who have agreed to give me a share of the leftovers, will regain their natural limbs. The adhvaryus and others who have lost their arms will use the arms of the Ashvins, while those whose hands have been severed will use those of Pushan. Bhrigu will have the beard of a he-goat.'"

'Maitreya continued, "O son! All the beings heard the words spoken by the generous Mrida. They were satisfied and uttered words of praise. Along with the rishis, the gods [1284] invited Mrida. Along with Mrida and Brahma, they went to the place where the sacrifice was being held. Everything was done as the illustrious Bhava had indicated. Ka's body was fixed to the head of the animal meant for the sacrifice. [1285] When Daksha's head was being fixed, Rudra glanced at him. Waking up as if he had been asleep, he saw Mrida standing in front of him. Prajapati's heart was polluted with hatred for the one with the bull on his banner. However, as soon as he saw Shiva, it became as clean as a lake in the autumn. He wished to utter words of praise to Bhava. But since he remembered his daughter and his voice choked with tears of affection and anxiety, he was incapable of doing this. Overwhelmed by affection, he calmed his mind with great difficulty. With his intelligence restored and without any duplicity in his sentiments, he praised the lord.

'"Daksha said, 'You have shown a great favour to me. Deceived by me, you invoked a punishment on me. O illustrious one! You and Hara do not ignore brahma-bandhus, not to speak of those who are firm in their vows. From your own mouth you first created brahmanas who know about the brahman, for the sake of upholding learning, austerities and vows. O supreme one! O lord! That is the reason you protect brahmanas from all calamities, like a herdsman using a rod to protect a herd of animals. Since I did not know about the truth, in the assembly hall, I hurled harsh words that were like arrows, but you ignored them. Because I censured someone who was the greatest, I was headed downwards. However, the illustrious one looked at me with compassion and saved me. Let him be satisified with what he has done.'"

‘Maitreya continued, “He thus sought his forgiveness from Mrida. With the permission of the brahmanas and with the preceptors, the officiating priests and the others, he started the rites again. The place had been contaminated by the touch of the brave ones. [1286] Therefore, to purify it and continue with the sacrifice, the best among brahmanas tendered three offerings of cakes to Vishnu. O lord of the earth! As the adhvaryu held the oblations, the performer of the sacrifice purified his intelligence and offered them to Hari, who manifested himself. He illuminated the ten directions with his radiance, making their energy fade. He was brought there by Tarkshya, whose wings are the two *stotra*s. [1287] His complexion was dark and his garments were golden. His diadem dazzled like the sun. His face was adorned with blue locks that were like dark bees and earrings. He wielded a conch shell, a lotus, a chakra, an arrow, a bow, a mace, a sword and a shield in arms decorated with golden ornaments. He was like a blossoming *karnikara* tree. His wife [1288] and a garland of wild flowers were on his chest. Even a tiny bit of his smiling glance delighted the universe. There were whisks made out of yak hair, resembling swans, fanning his sides. He was beautiful, with a white umbrella resembling the moon held aloft his head. All the large number of gods saw him arrive. With Brahma, Indra and the three-eyed one [1289] leading, they instantly arose and bowed down to him. His radiance robbed them of their energy. Awed by him, their tongues were silent. They joined their hands in salutation above their heads and presented themselves before Adhokshaja. His greatness was beyond the mental comprehension of the self-creating one [1290] and the others. But out of compassion, he had manifested himself in that form and according to their intelligence, they chanted his praises. Daksha tendered the deserved offerings in an excellent vessel. Extremely delighted, he controlled himself. Joining his hands in salutation, he chanted the praise of the lord of sacrifices, the supreme preceptor of the creators of the worlds, [1291] the one who is served by attendants like Nanda and Sunanda.

‘“Daksha said, ‘You are pure. You are in your own abode. You are beyond everything that is a mental state. You are consciousness alone. You are without a second. You are beyond fear. You control maya. But when you

enter it as Purusha, you seem to be contaminated by it, though you are self-dependent.'

'"The officiating priests said, 'O one who is not tainted! O illustrious one! Because of Rudra's curse, our intelligence became attached to action for fruits. We did not know the truth about you. We have known this sacrifice, with its three parts, [1292] as something that bears the signs of dharma. We knew the ordinances of sacrificing to the gods as the truth.'

'"The assistant priests said, 'O one who grants refuge! We do not have a refuge along this path of birth and death. There is a heavy burden and it is difficult to pass, with Death looming in front. When one searches for material satisfaction, there are predatory beasts. It is like a mirage and homes are heavy with the burden of opposite sentiments. One is scared of these ditches. There are carnivorous beasts, with a circle of a forest conflagration around it. Those who are ignorant about the meaning suffer from this. When will those who have been touched by desire seek out your feet?'

'"Rudra said, 'O granter of boons! Even in this world, your excellent feet deliver all the objectives that are desired. They deserve to be lovingly worshipped, even by sages who possess no attachment. Though my intelligence is fixed on them, the ignorant ones in this world say that I am not purified. However, because of your supreme favours, I attach no value to what they say.'

'"Bhrigu said, 'Because of your maya, Brahma and the other embodied beings have been deprived of their knowledge of the atman. They sleep in the darkness of ignorance. Even now, they do not understand your true nature, which is inside their atmans. You are the atman and a friend to those who bow down before you. Show me your favours.'

'"Brahma said, 'If a man looks at you with eyes that differentiate between various kinds of knowledge, he does not realize your true nature. You are the store of knowledge, artha and the gunas. You are regarded as distinct from what is made out of maya.'

'"Indra said, 'O Achyuta! This form of yours, which leads to the creation of the universe, brings delight to the mind and the eyes. Your eight arms

possess upraised weapons, meant to punish and chastise those who hate the gods.'

'"The wives [1293] said, 'This sacrifice was devised by the creator as a sacrifice dedicated to you. However, because he was enraged at Daksha, Pashupati destroyed it today. The sacrificial animals are quiet and their dead bodies are lying down. O one whose atman is the sacrifice! O one with beautiful eyes like a lotus! Let it be purified by your glance.'

'"The rishis said, 'O illustrious one! Your activities are incomprehensible. You execute them yourself, but are not touched by the action. Ishvari [1294] is worshipped for prosperity. She herself follows you, but you do not pay any attention to her.'

'"The Siddhas said, 'This account of your pastimes is a river that is full of pure nectar. Our minds are like elephants, suffering because they have been burnt in forest conflagrations. Thirsty, we immerse ourselves in it and do not remember the conflagration of samsara. Having merged with the brahman, we do not desire to come out.'

'"The wife of the person performing the sacrifice [1295] said, 'O lord! Welcome. I bow down to you. Show me your favours. You are Shri's abode. May you and your beloved Shri save us. O supreme lord! Like a body without a head, the sacrifice is not beautiful without you. It is like a man who is a headless torso.'

'"The guardians of the world said, 'You have been seen by us with eyes that are imperfect in sight. [1296] You are like a seer within and see this universe. O infinite lord! It is indeed because of your maya that you manifest yourself as a sixth, along with the five elements.'

'"The lords of yoga said, 'O lord! To you, there is no one more loved than a person who does not see himself as different from you, the atman of the universe. There are those who faithfully worship you, without deviating and without following anything else. O gracious one! Show them your favours. He is the destiny behind the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe. Through his maya, he manifests many kinds of gunas. Using his powers, he has created this differentiation between living beings.

However, in his own atman, the interaction between these gunas ceases. We bow down before you.'

'"'Brahma said, 'I bow down before the one who is the refuge of sattva, the source of dharma and everything else. You are nirguna. Your state is not known to me and certainly not to others.'

'"'Agni said, 'It is because of your energy that my energy blazes in the kindling. In every good sacrifice, I bear the oblations that are soaked in ghee. You are the one who protects the sacrifice. You have five forms and are worshipped properly through the five hymns of the Yajur Veda. [1297] I bow down to the sacrifice.'

'"'The gods said, 'After the last kalpa, you withdrew everything that you caused inside your own stomach. You are the Purusha who lay down in the waters on the excellent bed that was Shesha, Indra among serpents. You are the path towards adhyatma, which Siddhas search for, and meditate on, in their hearts. You are now moving around in the range of our visions. We are your servants.'

'"'The gandharvas said, 'O god! Marichi and the others, Brahma, Indra and the others, the large number of gods, with Rudra at the forefront, are your portions. O supreme lord! This entire universe is a receptacle that you are playing with. O protector! Therefore, we always bow down before you.'

'"'The vidyadharas said, 'Having obtained this body, [1298] an evil-minded person sticks to the wrong path because of your maya and has notions of "I" and "mine". He is distracted by his desire for material objects and confounds himself. A person who finds delight in the amrita of your account will be delivered from this.'

'"'The brahmanas said, 'You are the sacrifice. You are the oblations. You are yourself the sacrificial fire. You are the mantras, the kindling, the darbha grass and the sacrificial vessels. You are the supervising priest and the officiating priests. You are the couple [1299] and the divinity. You are agnihotra, svadha, soma, clarified butter and the sacrificial animal. In the past, in the form of a giant boar, you roared and playfully raised the earth from rasatala on your tusks, like an Indra among elephants picking up a lotus, and were praised by the yogis. Your body consists of the three. [1300] You are the rites

of the sacrifice. May he show us his favours. We have deviated from a virtuous act [1301] and all of us desire to see him. O lord of the sacrifice! When your name is chanted by men, all obstructions to a sacrifice head towards their destruction. We bow down to him.'"

'Maitreya continued, "O fortunate one! While Hrishikesha, the protector of the sacrifice, was thus being praised, the wise Daksha started the sacrifice that had been destroyed by Rudra. The illustrious one is in all atmans. Though he enjoys all the shares of the sacrifice, he was satisfied with his own share. O unblemished one! He addressed Daksha and said the following.

'"The illustrious one said, 'I am Brahma and Sharva [1302] and the supreme cause behind the universe. I am the lord of the atman. I am the witness. My own insight is without any differentiation. O brahmana! I have entered my own maya, full of the gunas. I create, preserve and destroy the universe and have a different name, depending on the action. There is no one second to the brahman and I am the paramatman. Those who see differences between Brahma and Rudra, or between living beings, are ignorant. A man sometimes thinks that his own limbs, head, hands and other parts are different. But if a person is devoted to me, his intelligence is not differentiated in this way. If a person does not see the three [1303] as one and perceives differences, he does not find peace. The brahman is in the atmans of all living beings.'"

'Maitreya continued, "The lord of all the Prajapatis was instructed by the illustrious Hari in this fashion. He first worshipped him through rites and then worshipped the other gods in both ways. [1304] He controlled himself and worshipped Rudra, offering him his own share. When the concluding rites of the sacrifice were over, he offered soma to the ones who were entitled and to others. Having done this, with the priests, he bathed. [1305] Through this worship, on his own, he obtained powers. However, the gods also conferred the boon that his intelligence would be on dharma and went to heaven. We have heard that in this way, Dakshayani Sati gave up her former body. She was then born through Himalaya and his wife, Mena. Ambika again accepted her beloved as her husband. She was single-minded in her devotion towards him and to no one else, just as Shakti is dormant inside

Purusha. Thus, the illustrious Shambhu performed the act of destroying Daksha's sacrifice. I heard this from Uddhava, who was devoted to the illustrious one and was Brihaspati's disciple. This is the sacred account of what the supreme lord did. If a man always devotedly listens to it and narrates it, he obtains fame and a long lifespan. His sins are cleansed. O Kourava! All his taints are purged."'

Chapter 4(8)

'Maitreya said, "Brahma's sons, Sanaka and the others, Narada, Ribhu, Hamsa, Aruna and Yati, did not resort to the life of a householder. They held up their seed. O destroyer of enemies! Adharma's wife was Mrisha and she gave birth to twins—Dambha and Maya. Since Nirriti had no offspring, she accepted that couple. [1306] O immensely intelligent one! From them were born Lobha and Nikriti. From these were born Krodha, Himsa, Kali and his sister, Durukti. [1307] O excellent one! Through Durukti, Kali had Bhaya and Mrityu as offspring. Through this couple, Yatana and Niraya were born. [1308] O unblemished one! I have briefly told you about the secondary creation, after destruction. If a man hears this sacred account thrice, all impurities are cleansed from his soul. O extender of the Kuru lineage! I will now describe the lineage of Svayambhuva Manu, who was auspicious in his deeds and was born as Hari's portion. Through Shatarupa, he had sons named Priyavrata and Uttanapada. They were born from Vasudeva's portion and were established as protectors of the universe. Uttanapada had two wives, Suniti and Suruchi. Suruchi was the one who was loved more. The other wife's son was Dhruva.

'"Once, the king was fondling Suruchi's son, Uttama, on his lap. Dhruva tried to clamber up, but the king did not welcome this. When Dhruva, her co-wife's son, tried to do this, in the king's hearing, Suruchi became envious and spoke proudly. 'O child! You do not deserve to ascend on to the king's lap. Though you are a king's son, you have not been born from my womb. Since you are a child, you do not know that you have been born

from another woman's womb. Therefore, know that what you are trying to get is impossible to obtain. Your wishes will be in vain. If you desire the king's throne, worship Purusha through austerities. Through his favours, you may then be born through my womb and be successful.' He was thus pierced by the harsh words of his mother's co-wife. He sighed like an angry serpent that had been beaten with a stick. He saw that his father was silent and did not say anything. Therefore, he left his presence and weeping, went to his mother. He was sighing and his lips were trembling. Suniti picked up the child on her lap. From the mouths of the residents of the city, she heard what her co-wife had said and was distressed. She lost her patience and lamented in grief. The maiden was like a creeper burnt down in a forest conflagration. She remembered the words of her co-wife. Her face was like a lotus and tears flowed from her beautiful eyes. She sighed deeply and could not see an end to her miseries. The maiden spoke to the child. 'O son! Do not blame others for this inauspicious state. A person who inflicts pain on others has to himself suffer it. Suruchi spoke the truth. You were born from me. An unfortunate person like me bore you in her womb. You were reared on the milk of someone my husband is ashamed about. He does not accept me as his wife. O son! Remain above jealousy. What your stepmother has said is true. Abide by that path. If you desire an excellent seat, worship Adhokshaja's lotus feet. By worshipping his lotus feet, Aja obtained the qualities required for creating the universe and obtained the status of Parameshthi. His feet deserve to be worshipped by those who have controlled their atmans and their breath of life. The illustrious Manu was your grandfather. Single-minded in devotion to him, he performed sacrifices with copious amounts of dakshina. Through this worship, he obtained a status that is difficult to get. He obtained happiness on earth, and divine liberation thereafter. O child! Seek him out as a refuge. He is devoted to his devotees. Those who search for liberation seek out the path to his lotus feet. With no one else in mind, think of your own dharma. Placing him in your mind, worship Purusha. Other than the lotus-eyed one, I cannot think of anyone else who can dispel this unhappiness. Though she is sought after by others, Shri, with a lotus in her hand, seeks him out.' These words, uttered by his

mother, were full of great import and entered his ears. He thought about them. Using his will to control his mind, he left his father's city.

'"Narada got to know about his desires. He approached and touched his head with his purifying hand. Surprised, he exclaimed, 'The energy of kshatriyas is wonderful. It does not tolerate the slightest bit of disrespect. Even though he is a child, he has taken to heart the harsh words spoken by his stepmother.' Narada said, 'O son! We notice that boys are attracted to playing and similar things. The sense of respect or disrespect is not developed. Even if that sense is developed, other than being confounded, there is no reason for a man to be dissatisfied. In this world, people are different because of their own karmas. O son! Therefore, a wise man should be satisfied with that alone. One must witness the progress of the lord and of destiny. Your mother has instructed that you must seek to elevate yourself through yoga, so that you can obtain his favour. However, it is my view that this is very difficult for men to pursue. Non-attached, sages have followed this path across many births. They have meditated, resorting to fierce yoga. However, they have not been able to find what they were searching for. Therefore, return. This determination of yours is bound to fail. In due course of time, you should strive for what will bring you benefit. This happiness and unhappiness are determined by destiny. If an embodied person wishes to cross over to the other side of darkness, he should satisfy himself with this. One should take delight at someone who possesses superior qualities. One should have compassion for one who has inferior qualities. One should seek friendship with equals. Thereby, one will not succumb to the torment.' Dhruva replied, 'O illustrious one! For those who suffer from happiness and unhappiness, driven by compassion, you have spoken about equanimity. But men like us find this extremely difficult to perceive. My heart has been shattered by Suruchi's harsh words, which are like arrows. I am not humble. I am a kshatriya and have not achieved that kind of tolerance. I desire to obtain a state that is best in the three worlds, one that has not been obtained by my forefathers, or by anyone else. O brahmana! Tell me about that virtuous path. O illustrious one! Indeed, you have been born from Parameshthi's limbs. For the welfare of the world, you roam around

like the sun and play on your veena.' Hearing this, the illustrious Narada was delighted. Out of compassion towards the child, he spoke these excellent words. Narada said, 'The path indicated by your mother is most beneficial for you. With a mind that is completely absorbed, worship the illustrious Vasudeva. If one desires the benefit known as dharma, artha, kama, moksha, the only means of accomplishing that is by serving at Hari's feet. O son! O fortunate one! Therefore, go to the banks of the Yamuna. The pure and sacred Madhuvana is there and Hari is always present there. Thrice a day, have a bath in Kalindi's auspicious waters. Perform the indicated rites. Think of a suitable asana for yourself and be seated there. Perform the three kinds of pranayama [1309] and gradually purify your breath of life, senses and mind, giving up all impurities. With a steady mind, meditate on the preceptor of all preceptors. He is ready to show his favours. His face and glance are always pleasant. He possesses an excellent nose and excellent eyebrows. His forehead is beautiful and he is the most handsome among the gods. He is youthful and his limbs are beautiful. His lips and eyes are red. He is the only refuge one should bow down to. He is the pleasant refuge and an ocean of compassion. He bears the mark of shrivatsa. He is dark blue in complexion. He is Purusha, wearing a garland of wild flowers. He manifests four arms that hold a conch shell, a chakra, a mace and a lotus. He wears a diadem, earrings, armlets and bracelets. The Koustubha gem adorns his neck. He is attired in yellow silk garments. His girdle is ornamented with tinkling bells. There are golden anklets around his feet. He is beautiful to behold and serene. He is a delight to the mind and the eyes. His feet are radiant because of an array of nails that are like jewels. He is stationed in this form in the hearts of his devotees, like the stamen in a lotus. One should meditate on this smiling form, which looks benevolently at his devotees. One must control one's mind and single-mindedly immerse oneself in him, supreme among those who grant boons. Thus, in one's mind, one must meditate on the extremely fortunate form of the illustrious one. One will soon be filled with supreme nivritti. Enriched in this way, one will not return. [1310] O son of a king! Listen to this extremely secret *japa*. [1311] If a man recites this for seven nights, he can see beings who travel through the

skies. [1312] "Oum! I bow down before the illustrious Vasudeva." [1313] Using this mantra, a learned person must worship the god with different objects. A person who knows about the time and the place, will accordingly use different objects and different modes. He will offer pure water, garlands of wild flowers, roots, fruits, fresh grass, buds and bark that are approved for worship and tulasi, loved by the lord. If one can get it, one can use an image for the worship. If not, one can worship him by using earth and water. The sage must be tranquil and control his mind and speech. He must frugally eat whatever is available in the forest. Uttamashloka uses his own incomprehensible maya to voluntarily assume avataras and undertake many kinds of deeds. In one's heart, one must meditate on these. Those who have worshipped him earlier have used many kinds of objects and forms. With the mantra in one's heart, one must use these. He is the embodied form of the mantra. In this way, the illustrious one, who is in the mind, must be worshipped with body, mind and words. A man must properly worship him with faith and devotion. He increases their faith and bestows on these embodied beings, the benefit that they desire, dharma and the other objectives. One must be indifferent towards the objects of the senses and practise bhakti yoga in earnest. For the sake of liberation, one must worship him constantly and attentively.' Thus addressed, the king's son bowed down before him and circumambulated him. He went to sacred Madhuvana, decorated with Hari's footprints.

'"When he had entered the forest for austerities, the sage went to the inner quarters. The king welcomed him with objects of honour. When he was comfortably seated, he spoke. Narada asked, 'O king! What have you been thinking about for a long time, with a face that is dry? Has your pursuit of kama, dharma or artha been obstructed?' The king replied, 'O brahmana! My son is a child. He is only five years old, but is great and wise. I and my wife have been cruel in our hearts and have exiled him, along with his mother. O brahmana! He is without a protector in the forest. I hope my son has not been devoured by wolves. He is hungry and exhausted and is lying down. His face is like a lotus and must have faded. Alas! Look at my evil conduct, having been vanquished by a woman. The excellent one wished to

affectionately climb on to my lap, but I did not welcome him.' Narada said, 'O lord of the earth! Do not grieve. Your son has been protected by the god. You do not know about his powers. His reputation pervades the universe. O king! The lord [1314] will perform a task that is extremely difficult for even the guardians of the worlds to achieve. He will soon return here and bring great fame to you.' The lord of the earth heard what the devarshi said. He disregarded the prosperity of the kingdom and only thought about his son.

'"Having arrived there, he [1315] bathed. He controlled himself and fasted during the night. As instructed, he attentively worshipped Purusha. He spent one month in worshipping Hari. He only ate at the end of every third night and ate wood apples and jujube berries, only enough to sustain himself. In the second month, the boy continued to worship the lord. He only ate every sixth day and his food consisted of dry blades of grass and leaves. In the third month, he meditated and worshipped Uttamashloka. He subsisted on water, that too, on every ninth day. In the fourth month, he meditated on the god and worshipped him. He controlled his breathing and subsisted on air, that too, on every twelfth day. When the fifth month arrived, the son of the king conquered his breath of life. Standing on a single foot, he meditated on the brahman. He was as immobile as a post. He withdrew his mind from all elements and objects of the senses. In his heart, he meditated on the form of the illustrious one and looked at nothing else. He thus fixed his dharana on the brahman, the foundation of Mahat and the others, and the lord of Pradhana and Purusha. At this, the three worlds started to tremble. The son of the king stood on one leg and the earth was pressed down by his big toe. Half of the earth bent down, just as a boat carrying a large elephant is rocked, depending on whether the elephant raises its left leg or its right. He meditated on the one who is the atman of the universe. Unwavering in his intelligence, he obstructed the gates in his body and his breath of life. The worlds could not breathe and suffered severely. With the guardians of the world, they went and sought refuge with Hari. The gods said, 'O illustrious one! O abode of sattva! We do not know why the breath of life of every mobile and immobile object has been restricted. Therefore, do what is necessary to save us from this danger. You are the refuge and we have come to

you, seeking refuge.' The illustrious one replied, 'Do not be frightened. The child is performing extremely difficult austerities and I will ask him to refrain. Return to your own abodes. Uttanapada's son has identified his atman with mine. That is the reason your breath of life has been obstructed.'"'

Chapter 4(9)

'Maitreya said, "Urukrama spoke to them in this way and dispelled their fears. They bowed down to him and returned to heaven. The one with the thousand heads wished to see his devotee and, astride Garuda, went to Madhuvana. With a purified intelligence, he [1316] was immersed in fierce yoga, with the lord's form manifested in the lotus of his heart, as resplendent as lightning. He suddenly discovered that this form vanished. Instead, he saw that identical form stationed outside. On seeing him arrive before him, he bent his body down and prostrated himself on the ground, like a rod. The boy looked at him, drinking him in with his eyes. It was as if he was kissing him with his mouth and embracing him with his arms. Hari is situated in everyone's heart. He saw him standing there, hands joined in salutation, full of the brahman and wishing to praise him, but not knowing how. Out of compassion, he touched the child on the forehead with the conch shell. As soon as this was done, he got back his speech. He realized the true nature of the divine paramatman. Full of sentiments of devotion, whose status had been determined, he started to quickly chant the praises of the glorious one whose fame is pervasive.

'"Dhruva said, 'O lord who is inside! O one who possesses infinite powers! You have used your powers to penetrate me and revive my power of speech, which was asleep, and also my hands, feet, ears, skin and breath of life. O illustrious Purusha! I bow down to you. O illustrious one! You are one. You have used your own great powers, known as maya, and its gunas, to create Mahat and all the others. You are Purusha and you enter and manifest yourself in the form of the different temporary gunas, like fire in different kinds of wood. Like a man who wakes up from sleep, he [1317] sought

refuge with you as a protector. Through the knowledge you gave him, he could see the universe. [1318] Those who desire liberation seek refuge at your feet. You are a friend of the afflicted. How can a person who is accomplished in learning forget you? Your maya has certainly confounded the intelligence of those who worship you for reasons other than to be liberated from this cycle of birth and death. You are like a tree that yields every object of desire. But they worship you to satisfy desires in a body that is like a corpse. Such men desire the pleasure of the touch, [1319] available even in hell. O protector! The delight that embodied beings find from meditating on your lotus feet and hearing the account of your greatness from your devotees, is not there in the brahman. [1320] What need be said about those who fall down from their vimanas, struck by the sword of Death? Let me have repeated association with those in whom devotion towards you is flowing. O infinite one! Let me be with great ones whose hearts are unsullied. In that way, I will easily overcome the terrible and great hardships of this ocean of life and cross it. I will drink the amrita of your qualities and become intoxicated. O lord! O one with a lotus in the navel! As a result of an association with them, one does not remember this beloved mortal body and sons, well-wishers, houses, riches and wives. This is what happens from association with those whose hearts are eager for the fragrance of your lotus feet. O one without birth! I know your gross form, consisting of inferior species, trees, birds, reptiles, gods, daityas, mortal beings and the others. This has manifest and unmanifest dimensions, based on Mahat and other principles. O supreme one! I do not know your supreme form, which is beyond words. O supreme being! At the end of the kalpa you lie down, withdrawing everything into your stomach. O friend of Ananta! You look at yourself, lying down on his [1321] lap. From the ocean in your navel sprouts a golden lotus and the radiant one [1322] is manifested from this lotus. I bow down to the illustrious one. You are eternally free and pure. You are the omniscient atman. You are the immutable original being. You are the illustrious lord of the three. [1323] Through your own unobstructed vision, you comprehend the state of different kinds of intelligence. You are the witness, stationed as the lord of sacrifices. You are beyond all this. There are always two kinds of

contrary manifestations in you, knowledge and ignorance. There are many kinds of progressive powers. You are the brahman, the cause of the universe. You are one, infinite and original. You are only bliss and without change. I worship you. O illustrious one! Compared to other blessings, true benediction is in your lotus feet. For those who worship you, you are the embodied form of all objectives. O noble one! O illustrious one! Hence, you nurture those who are distressed, like a cow which takes care of a calf. Show your compassion towards miserable ones like me.'"

'Maitreya continued, "He was thus worshipped by the intelligent one, whose resolution was true. The illustrious one is devoted to his servants. He applauded these words and said the following.

'"'The illustrious one replied, 'O son of a king! I know the determination in your heart. O fortunate one! O one who is excellent in vows! I will give it to you, though it is extremely difficult to obtain. O fortunate one! I will confer on you the brilliant and eternal world, [1324] which has not been obtained by anyone else. The planets, nakshatras, stars and luminous bodies circle around it. They are like a group of cows circling around a central pole. [1325] It is beyond those who reside in a kalpa. [1326] The stars presided over by Dharma, Agni, Kashyapa, Shukra and the sages [1327] who are residents of the forest circle around it, keeping it to their right. When your father leaves for the forest, he will give you the earth and based on dharma and with your senses unimpaired, [1328] you will protect it for thirty-six thousand years. While out on a hunt, your brother, Uttama, will be killed. Her mind distressed by this, his mother will go to the forest to search for him and will enter a forest conflagration. I am the heart of sacrifices. You will perform sacrifices dedicated to me and offer a lot of dakshina. Having enjoyed a lot of blessings in this world, at the end, you will turn to the truth and remember me. You will then go to my abode, worshipped by all the worlds. It is located above that of the rishis. [1329] Having gone there, no one returns.'"

'Maitreya continued, "The illustrious one, with Garuda on his banner, was thus worshipped and offered to bestow his own state. While the child looked on, he returned. Having served at Vishnu's feet, he [1330] obtained his

desired objective. However, though he obtained what he wished, he wasn't extremely happy. He returned to the city.

'"Vidura asked, 'Hari's supreme state is extremely difficult to obtain. This can only be earned by those who worship his feet without being distracted by maya. He obtained this and accomplished his objective in a single life. Why did the one who knew about the truth think that he was unsuccessful?'"

'Maitreya replied, "He remembered his stepmother's words, which had pierced his heart like arrows. He did not desire emancipation from the lord of emancipation. Therefore, he suffered from repentance.

'"Dhruva thought, 'Through meditation, I obtained his feet in a single life. I obtained those feet within six months, something that Sananda and the others, who hold up their seed, seek to realize. Having obtained that refuge, I retreated from it because of the differentiation in my intelligence. Alas! Behold an unfortunate person like me. I did not understand the atman. Having obtained the feet of someone who can sever the cycle of existence, I asked for something temporary. My intelligence was polluted by gods who have positions lower than mine. As a wretched person, I did not accept Narada's words. Divine maya took hold of me. Like a person asleep, my vision was differentiated. I tormented myself, thinking of a second that is non-existent. [1331] I lament because I took my brother to be an enemy. Like treating a person who is dead, everything that I sought for is futile. Through austerities, I pleased the atman of the universe, who is extremely difficult to please. I should have asked for the severance of this cycle of life. However, abandoned by fortune, I sought this cycle of life. He wished to confer on me his own state. But foolishly, with my merit exhausted, I asked him for honours, like a person without riches seeking unhusked grains from an emperor.'"

'Maitreya continued, "O son! People like you are eager to touch the dust on Mukunda's lotus feet. Other than servitude to him, they do not desire anything for themselves. Satisfied with whatever has been obtained, they take themselves to be prosperous. When the king heard that his son was returning, as if returning from the world of the dead, he did not believe it.

‘How can an unfortunate person like me be so fortunate?’ He was overwhelmed by a great tide of joy and had faith in the worlds of the devarshi. He was extremely happy with the person who had brought him the news and gave him an extremely valuable necklace. He mounted a chariot made out of molten gold, yoked to excellent horses. He was surrounded by brahmanas, the elders of his family, advisers and relatives. There was the sound of conch shells, drums being played, flutes, and recitations of the brahman. Anxious to see his son, he quickly emerged from the city. The queens, Suniti and Suruchi, were ornamented in gold. With Uttama, they ascended a palanquin and advanced. On seeing him approach from the grove, the king swiftly got down from his chariot. Distracted by affection, he approached him. With a mind that had been anxious for a long time, he sighed deeply and embraced the one born from his body in his arms. Having touched Vishvaksena’s feet, he [1332] had been cleansed of all the bonds of sin. With his cherished desire satisfied, he repeatedly inhaled the fragrance of his son’s head and bathed it with cool tears that flowed from his eyes. He first worshipped his father’s feet and obtained his benedictions. He bowed his head down before his two mothers and was honoured by the foremost among the virtuous ones. Suruchi raised her son, [1333] who was prostrate at her feet. In a voice that choked with tears, she embraced him and said, ‘May you live for a long time.’ If the illustrious one is pleased with someone and bestows qualities on him because of friendliness, all creatures bow down before him, like water automatically flowing downwards. Overwhelmed by affection, Uttama and Dhruva embraced each other’s bodies. Delighted, they shed tears and their body hair stood up. His mother, Suniti, embraced her beloved son, whom she loved more than her own life. She touched his body and was not satisified. But she abandoned all grief. O brave one! Copious flows of milk flowed from her breasts, which were incessantly bathed by auspicious tears of joy that flowed from the eyes of someone who had given birth to a brave person. People praised the queen. ‘It is good fortune that your son has dispelled your grief. After having been lost for a long time, he has been regained and will protect the circle of the earth. You must have worshipped the illustrious one, who dispels the sorrows of those who

bow down before him. Patient people constantly meditate on him and conquer death, which is extremely difficult to vanquish.' The people praised and cherished Dhruva in this way.

'"Happy, the king made him and his brother climb on to a she-elephant and entered the city. Here and there, dazzling arches that were in the shape of makaras had been constructed. There were pillars made out of plantain trees and young areca nut trees, with branches laden with fruit. Every door had pots filled with water, with burning lamps on them. There were decorations of mango leaves, garments, garlands and strings of pearls that hung downwards. The ramparts, gates and houses were decorated with molten gold. Everything was ornamented and the tops of the mansions were as radiant as vimanas. The quadrangles, highways, seats and roads were cleaned with sandalwood water. Everywhere, fried, unhusked grain, flowers, fruits, rice and offerings were strewn around. Here and there, as Dhruva passed along the road, the women of the city showered white mustard, unhusked grain, curds, water, durva grass, flowers and fruits on him. Out of their affection, those virtuous ones pronounced benedictions over him. Listening to melodious songs, he entered his father's residence. That supreme of residences was decorated with collections of extremely expensive jewels. Always nurtured by his father, he lived there, like a god in heaven. The couches were made out of ivory and had the complexion of the froth of milk. They were covered with golden spreads. There were extremely expensive seats and the cushions were decorated with gold. The walls were made out of crystal and extremely expensive emeralds. There were dazzling lamps made out of jewels, held by statuettes of women, also made out of jewels. The beautiful gardens were full of colourful and celestial trees. Pairs of birds sang there and intoxicated bees buzzed. The steps leading down into the lakes were made of lapis lazuli and the lakes were full of blue lotuses and lilies. They were inhabited by flocks of swans, karandavas, chakravakas and cranes. Uttanapada, the royal sage, heard about, and also saw, his son's wonderful powers and was greatly surprised. He saw that he had come of age. With the approval of the ordinary people, who loved Dhruva, the king made him the lord of the earth. The lord of the earth saw that he himself

was old. He perceived the progress of the atman and devoid of attachment, left for the forest."'

Chapter 4(10)

'Maitreya said, "Dhruva married the daughter of Prajapati Shishumara. Her name was Bhrami and her sons were Kalpa and Vatsara. He had another wife named Ila, Vayu's daughter. Through her, the extremely strong one had a son named Utkala, whom women loved like a jewel. [1334] Uttama did not marry. While out on a hunt on a mountain, he was killed by an auspicious person who was stronger. [1335] His mother followed the path her son took. Hearing about his brother's death, he was filled with rage, intolerance and grief. He ascended his victorious chariot and went to the abode of those auspicious people. The king went to the northern direction, frequented by Rudra's companions. In a valley in the Himalayas, he saw the city, inhabited by guhyakas. The large-armed one blew on his conch shell and this echoed in the sky and in the directions.

"'O Kshatta! Hearing this sound, the minor goddesses [1336] were anxious and extremely scared. The minor gods, powerful and great warriors, emerged. They were unable to tolerate that sound. Raising their weapons, they attacked him. When they descended, the brave maharatha, fierce in wielding the bow, simultaneously struck each of them with three arrows. Those arrows were stuck to each of their foreheads. Though they thought that they would be repulsed, they praised this action of his. They were also angry, like snakes struck with the foot. They sought to hit back by simultaneously striking him with double the number of arrows. [1337] There were one lakh and thirty thousand of them and they wished to retaliate. They angrily showered down clubs, swords, spears, javelins, battle-axes, spikes, broad swords, *bhushundi*s [1338] and colourfully tufted arrows on him, his chariot and his charioteer. Enveloped by that copious shower of weapons, Uttanapada's son could not be seen, like a mountain during the rains. The Siddhas were watching from the sky and cries of lamentation arose among them.

‘Alas! Like a submerged sun, Manu’s son has been destroyed in this ocean of auspicious people.’ The yatudhanas roared, proclaiming that they had been victorious in the battle. However, the chariot emerged, like the sun from behind a cover of mist. Causing distress in the minds of the enemy, he twanged his divine bow. Like the wind dispelling an army of clouds, he shattered the torrents of their weapons with a flood of arrows. Released from his bow, they pierced the armour of the rakshasas. The sharp arrows penetrated their bodies, like the vajra shattering mountains. The broad-headed arrows severed heads beautiful with earrings, thighs that were like golden palm trees, arms ornamented with bracelets and bodies with necklaces, armlets, crowns and extremely expensive headdresses. This resplendence in the field of battle delighted the minds of the brave. There were some from the horde of rakshasas who were not killed by the arrows of the noble kshatriya in that field of battle. Like herds with whom a king of animals [1339] has played, the bodies of most of them were mangled and they fled. In the great field of battle, Manu’s supreme descendant did not see any more assassins. Though he wished to see the city of the enemy, he did not enter. ‘One does not know what those skilled in maya intend.’ The one with the colourful chariot spoke in this way to his charioteer, remaining vigilant about what the enemy might do. At this time, he saw a great storm of dust cover the directions and the sky and heard a sound like the roaring of the ocean. In an instant, in every direction, the sky was shrouded by an army of clouds. There were flashes of lightning and the clap of thunder, terrifying all the directions. O unblemished one! Floods of blood, mucus, pus, excrement, urine and fat showered down from the sky in front of him, along with headless torsos. From every direction, clubs, maces, swords, bludgeons and stones showered down. A mountain appeared in the sky. Snakes with lightning in their breath, vomiting fire and with angry eyes, rushed at him. So did herds of mad elephants, lions and tigers. An ocean with terrible waves flooded the entire earth. It emitted a loud roar and was terrible, like at the end of a kalpa. There were many such things that would have caused terror to those less spirited. The asuras used the fierce maya of asuras to generate these. The sages heard that the asuras had used maya, extremely difficult to

withstand, against Dhruva. They assembled, desiring his welfare. The sages said, ‘O son of Uttanapada! The illustrious god, the wielder of the Sharnga bow, destroys the enemies of those who are devoted to him and removes their afflictions. On uttering his name, or hearing it, people completely overcome death, which is so very difficult to vanquish. He will do it to you too.’”’ [1340]

Chapter 4(11)

‘Maitreya said, “Hearing the words of the rishis, Dhruva touched water and affixed the weapon fashioned by Narayana to his bow. O Vidura! Just as hardships are dispelled by the onset of knowledge, as soon at it was affixed, all the maya devised by the guhyakas was destroyed. The rishi’s [1341] weapon was affixed to the bow, with golden shafts and tufts made out of the feathers of swans. Like peacocks call in terrible tones and enter a forest, it emerged and penetrated the army of the enemy. Here and there in the field of battle, the auspicious people were afflicted by sharp arrows sharpened on stone. Enraged, like serpents raising their angry hoods against Suparna, they raised their weapons and attacked him. As they attacked him in the field of battle, he severed their arms, thighs, necks and stomachs with those arrows. Piercing through the solar circle, he dispatched them to the supreme world that is frequented by those who hold up their seed. In large numbers, the innocent guhyakas were slaughtered by the one with the colourful chariot. Dhruva’s grandfather [1342] was overcome by pity. With the rishis, Manu approached.

‘“Manu said, ‘O child! Enough of this excessive rage. This is the wicked gate to darkness. Overwhelmed by this, you have killed the auspicious people who are innocent. O son! This is not proper for our lineage. This is a deed condemned by the virtuous. You have started this act of killing the minor gods who are innocent. O dear one! O one who is devoted to one’s brother! You are tormented at your brother’s death. But because of the crime of a single person, many are being killed because of association. This

is not a path for virtuous ones who follow Hrishikesha. Though they are like your own self, you are seizing others and slaughtering them like animals. You have worshipped Hari with the sentiment that his abode is in all beings and that all creatures are like your own self. You have obtained Vishnu's supreme state, which is so very difficult to obtain. Hari remembers you and men revere you because of that. How have you acted in this way? Instead, you should teach others about virtuous vows. The illustrious one is pleased through tolerance, compassion, friendliness towards all creatures and equality, because he is in all atmans. When the illustrious being is pleased, one is freed from the gunas of Prakriti. Freed from the jivatman, [1343] one obtains nirvana in the brahman. The bodies of men and women are formed out of the five elements. In this world, further creation occurs from association between men and women. O king! In this way, through the maya of the paramatman and the interaction of the gunas, creation, preservation and destruction take place. The supreme being is nirguna and is only an apparent instrument. This manifest and unmanifest universe whirls around, like a lump of iron. [1344] Indeed, the illustrious one's powers are in time, the flow of the gunas and the various kinds of energy. He is the agent, but is also not the agent. He is the destroyer, but is also not the destroyer. Indeed, the lord's actions are impossible to comprehend. He is infinite. He is the annihilator. He is time. He is without beginning. He is the beginning of everything. He is without change. He uses people to create other people. As an annihilator, he uses death to destroy. There is no one who is his ally. There is no one who is his adversary. As death, the supreme one equally enters all beings. Just as dust particles follow the wind, the large number of creatures move and follow the lord. The lord enhances, or diminishes, the lifespans of living entities. He confers good fortune and misfortune, but is himself beyond these two states. O king! Some speak of this as karma. Others say that this is nature. Some say this is time. Others say that this is destiny. Still others say that this is because of men being prone to desire. The immutable and immeasurable one gives rise to many kinds of powers. O son! Who is capable of knowing the intentions of the one who creates himself? O son! These followers of Dhanada are not your brother's slayers. O

son! It is indeed destiny which is the reason behind the birth and death of men. He is the one who creates the universe. He is the one who destroys it. Despite this, he is not touched by ahamkara, or gunas and actions. He is in the atmans of all beings who have been created. He is the lord of creatures. He is the creator of creatures. United with the maya of his powers, he creates, preserves and destroys. O son! He is death. He is immortality. He is destiny. Surrender to the one who is in all atmans. He is the refuge of the universe. He is the one to whom the creators of the universe [1345] render offerings, like a bull controlled by its master through a rope around the nose. When you were five years old, your heart was shattered by the words of your stepmother and you left for the forest, abandoning your mother. You performed austerities and worshipped the one who cannot be realized through the senses. You obtained a state that is above the three worlds. O dear one! Free yourself from this enmity. Base your atman on the nirguna and immutable one, who is without a second. Search your atman and look towards your atman. Free yourself from this sense of differentiation, which is non-existent, but appears to exist. In your atman, realize the illustrious and infinite one. He is bliss alone and possesses all the powers. Through devotion to the supreme one, you will slowly sever the bond of ignorance, the strong sense of "I" and "mine". O fortunate one! Control your rage, which is an impediment to supreme welfare. O king! Constantly resort to learning, just as one uses medication to treat a disease. If a man is overwhelmed by this, [1346] people are greatly terrified of him. A learned person who desires fearlessness for himself does not succumb to it. Since you were intolerant towards those who killed your brother, you have shown disrespect towards Girisha [1347] and Dhanada, by killing the auspicious people. O child! Quickly pacify the great one [1348] through respectful and reverential words, so that he does not use his energy to destroy our lineage.'"

'Maitreya concluded, "In this way, Svayambhuva Manu instructed his grandson Dhruva and was worshipped by him. With the rishis, he [1349] returned to his own city."'

Chapter 4(12)

‘Maitreya said, “Having learnt that Dhruva’s rage had subsided and that he had refrained from killing, the illustrious lord of riches arrived there, praised by charanas, yakshas and kinnaras.

‘“Dhanada joined his hand in salutation and said, ‘O heir of a kshatriya! O unblemished one! I am satisfied with you, since you have listened to the instructions of your grandfather and have abandoned enmity, which is extremely difficult to cast aside. You did not kill the yakshas. Nor did the yakshas kill your brother. Time is the lord over the creation and destruction of living beings. Misconceptions of “I” and “you” persistently exist because of a man’s ignorance. Because one thinks about it, [1350] one is bound to hardships and they appear like dreams to a person who is asleep. O Dhruva! O fortunate one! Therefore, go to the illustrious Adhokshaja. Think that he is in the atmans of all creatures. He is embodied in the atmans of all creatures. For deliverance and your severing the cycle of existence, worship the one whose feet deserve to be worshipped. Through the power of his own maya, he attaches himself to the gunas, but remains detached. O king! O Uttanapada’s son! Without any hesitation, ask me for a boon, for whatever desire exists in your heart. Since you are constantly devoted to his lotus feet, you deserve to be granted a boon. O dear one! That is what we have heard about you.’”

‘Maitreya continued, “The immensely fortunate and immensely intelligent Dhruva was urged by Rajaraja [1351] to accept a boon. He asked that Hari’s memory should always be with him and that he might easily cross the darkness, [1352] which is so very difficult to cross. With a cheerful mind, Aidavida [1353] granted him the boon and vanished, while he looked on. Then he [1354] also returned to his own city. There, he performed sacrifices to the lord of sacrifices, with copious quantities of dakshina. He also performed sacrifices with objects for the gods [1355] and rites meant to lead to the fruits of these rites. His entire soul was on Achyuta and there were strong flows of devotion towards him. He saw himself in all creatures and saw the lord also established there. The subjects thought that he possessed good conduct. He was devoted to brahmanas and to the distressed. He protected the ordi-

nances of dharma. They thought he was like their father. He ruled the globe of the earth for thirty-six thousand years. He enjoyed until his store of good deeds was exhausted. He refrained from enjoyment, so that his store of bad deeds was also exhausted. In this way, the great-souled one was not disturbed by his senses for a period that lasted for many years. After spending this time in the pursuit of the three objectives, [1356] he handed over the royal throne to his son. He then thought that this universe was fashioned by the maya of the atman. [1357] It was fashioned out of ignorance, like a city of the gandharvas. [1358] He thought that he himself, his wife, his children, his well-wishers, his forces, his prosperous treasury, his inner quarters, the beautiful pleasure gardens to roam around in and the surface of the earth, girdled by the ocean, were temporary and were the creatures of time. He left for Vishala. [1359] He purified himself there, bathing in the auspicious waters. He steadied himself in an asana and controlled his breath of life, using his mind to control his senses. He incessantly meditated on the illustrious one's gross form, thus entering a state of samadhi. Because he was constantly devoted to the illustrious Hari, he was overwhelmed and tears of joy repeatedly flowed from his eyes. His heart seemed to melt and his body hair stood up. He no longer remembered who he was and was freed from his linga sharira.

'"Dhruva then saw a vimana from the sky descend in front of him. It illuminated the ten directions, as if the lord of the stars had arisen. He saw two gods there. They possessed four arms and were dark and young. Their eyes were red, like lotus flowers. They stood there, leaning on their maces and attired in excellent garments. They were adorned in diadems, necklaces, armlets and beautiful earrings. He understood that they were the servants of the famous one. [1360] He stood up. But because he was bewildered, he forgot how to receive and worship them in the proper way. He only chanted the names of Madhu's enemy. [1361] He respectfully joined his hands in saluation to those two foremost attendants. His mind was focused on Krishna's feet. He joined his hands in salutation and humbly bowed down his head. Smiling, Sunanda and Nanda, revered by the one with the lotus in his navel, approached and said, 'O king! O extremely fortunate one! Listen attentively to our words. When you were five years old, you satisfied the divinity with

your austerities. We are the attendants of the god who wields the Sharnga bow. He is the creator of the entire universe. We have come here to take you to the illustrious one's world. You have conquered Vishnu's region for yourself, something that is extremely difficult to obtain. It is beyond what the gods [1362] can reach and they can only look at it. Ascend to the place that the moon, the sun, the planets, the nakshatras and the stars circle around, keeping it to their right. O dear one! This is a place that none of your forefathers has been able to reach. Ascend to Vishnu's supreme state, worshipped by the universe. This excellent vimana belongs to Uttamashloka, the foremost one. O long-lived one! It has presented itself and you are worthy of climbing on to it.' The one loved by Urukrama heard the sweet words, which were like drops of honey, spoken by the two foremost attendants of Vaikuntha. He performed his ablutions and performed the daily auspicious rites. He bowed down to the sages and received their benedictions. He circumambulated that excellent vehicle and worshipped it. He greeted the two attendants. Assuming a dazzling and golden form, he tried to climb on.

'"However, Uttanapada's son saw that Death had arrived. He placed his feet on Death's head and mounted that extraordinary residence. [1363] Drums, kettledrums and smaller drums were sounded. The foremost among gandharvas sang his praise and showered down flowers. As he was about to ascend to the world of heaven, Dhruva suddenly remembered his mother, Suniti. 'How can I abandon the miserable one and go to heaven?' Those two excellent gods [1364] discerned his thoughts and showed him that the goddess was already proceeding ahead of him, in another vehicle. As he proceeded, the gods, on their own vimanas, praised him and showered down flowers. One after another, he saw that he passed by all the planets. In that celestial vehicle, he went past the three worlds and that of the sages. [1365] Beyond all of them, Dhruva reached Vishnu's abode. In every direction, the place was resplendent because of its own illumination, indeed also providing illumination to the three worlds. This place cannot be reached by those who are not compassionate towards other creatures. Those who always perform beneficial acts reach there. Those who are tranquil, look upon everyone as equals, are pure and please all creatures; and those who look upon

Achyuta as a beloved relative, can easily go to Achyuta's abode. In this way, Dhruva, Uttanapada's son, was devoted to Krishna and became a sparkling jewel on the crest of the three worlds. O Kouravya! The stellar bodies ceaselessly circle around this spot with great speed, like a herd of tethered bulls circle around a threshing post. The illustrious rishi, Narada, witnessed his greatness. He played on his stringed instrument and chanted this shloka at the sacrifice organized by Prachetas. Narada said, 'Suniti was certainly devoted to her husband. Through the power of his austerities, her son obtained this destination. Those who speak about the Vedas know about the means to reach it, and can see it, but do not possess the powers to reach it, not to speak of kings. When he was five years old, his heart was shattered by the words, which were like arrows, of his father's wife. Following my instructions, he went to the forest and obtained the lord's abode, a status that can be obtained only by those who possess the qualities of devotion. There is no kshatra-bandhu [1366] on earth who can aspire to ascend to this status, even after many years. As a child who was five or six years old, he obtained this state within a few days, after pleasing Vaikuntha.' I have told you everything that you had asked me. This is the excellent account of Dhruva's conduct and fame, revered by the virtuous. This account brings fortune and fame and increases lifespans. It is auspicious and brings great benedictions. It helps attain heaven and the eternal worlds and is extremely pleasing to the mind. It is praiseworthy and destroys all sin. His deeds are loved by Achyuta. If one repeatedly listens to them with faith, one develops devotion towards the illustrious one. Thereby, there is a destruction of all kinds of hardships. If one desires greatness, this account is a tirtha. The hearer develops good conduct and other qualities and the account is for those who wish for energy. Thereby, spirited ones obtain honour. Controlling oneself and in the company of brahmanas, one should recite the great conduct of Dhruva, who is chanted about in excellent shlokas, in the morning and the evening. One should make the faithful listen to it on the day of the full moon, on *sinivali*, [1367] on the twelfth lunar day, [1368] when the nakshatra Shravana is in the ascendant, at the end of the day, at the time of *vyatipata*, [1369] at the time of *sankramana* [1370] and on Sunday. Such a person

should desire nothing other than seeking refuge with the one whose feet are tirthas. There, one will find the atman in one's own atman and will be successful and contented. If a person bestows the truth about this knowledge on the ignorant, he is on the virtuous path towards immortality. The god who is the lord of the distressed will take compassion on him and show him his favours. O extender of the Kuru lineage! I have thus described to you Dhruva's famous account. His deeds were pure. As a child, he abandoned playthings and his mother's house and went and sought refuge with Vishnu."'

Chapter 4(13)

Suta said, 'Vidura heard what Kousharava had described about Dhruva's ascent to his status in Vaikuntha. His devotion towards the illustrious Adhokshaja became firmer and he started to ask yet again.

'Vidura asked, "O one excellent in vows! Who were known as Prachetas and who were their offspring? Which famous family did they belong to and where did they undertake the sacrifice? I think that Narada, who met the god, is extremely fortunate. He is the one who spoke about *kriya yoga* and the rites one should observe for worshipping Hari. Those men [1371] followed good conduct and their own dharma. They performed a sacrifice to the illustrious one who is the lord of sacrifices. It was to them that the devoted Narada described everything. There, the devarshi described the illustrious one's account. O brahmana! I wish to hear about it. You should describe everything to me."

'Maitreya replied, "When his father left for the forest, Dhruva's son, Utkala, did not desire the prosperity of being an emperor and did not wish for his father's throne. Right from his birth, his soul was tranquil. He was unattached and was impartial in his outlook. He saw the atman pervading the world and saw the world in his own atman. Through the fire of continuous practice of yoga, he burnt down all karma and impurities in his mind. He saw that his own atman was no different from the brahman, the nirvana in whom all differences cease to exist. He is the single one, true knowledge and complete bliss, existing everywhere. He thus realized his own true nature. To foolish people along the road, he appeared to be stupid, blind, deaf, mad and dumb. However, his intelligence was not like that. He was like a fire without flames. But the aged in the family and the ministers were of the view that he was stupid and mad. Therefore, they made his younger brother, Vatsara, Bhrami's son, the king. Svavirthi was Vatsara's beloved wife and she had six sons—Pushparna, Tigmaketu, Isha, Urja, Vasu and Jaya. Pushparna had two wives—Prabha and Dosha. Prabha's sons were Pratar, Mad-

hyadina and Sayam. Dosha's three sons were Pradosha, Nishitha and Vyushta. [1372] Vyushta's wife was Pushkarini and she had a son named Sarvateja. Through his wife Akuti, he [1373] had a son named Chakshu, who would become Manu later. [1374] Manu's queen, Nadvala, gave birth to twelve faultless sons—Puru, Kutsa, Trita, Dyumna, Satyavat, Rita, Vrata, Agnishtoma, Atiratra, Pradyumna, Shibi and Ulmuka. Through his wife, Pushkarini, [1375] Ulmuka had six excellent sons—Anga, Sumanasa, Khyati, Kratu, Angiras and Gaya. Sunitha, Anga's wife, gave birth to the wicked Vena. Because of his wicked conduct, the royal sage [1376] was disgusted and left the city. O dear one! The words of the sages were like the vajra. They were enraged and cursed him. After this, they churned the right hand of the dead body. [1377] At that time, there was no king in the world and the subjects were oppressed by bandits. As part of Narayana's portion, Prithu, the first lord of the earth, was born."

'Vidura asked, "The king [1378] was virtuous, great-souled and a store of good conduct. He was devoted to brahmanas. How did he get such a wicked son, who made him so distressed that he had to leave? The sages were knowledgeable about dharma. King Vena was supposed to wield the rod of chastisement. What was his offence, as a consequence of which the brahmanas cursed him? The king is a protector of the subjects and even if he commits a crime, the subjects should not disrespect him. In addition to his own energy, he is nurtured through the energy of the guardians of the world. O brahmana! You are supreme among those who know about the past and the future. I am devoted and faithful towards you. Tell me about the activities of Sunitha's son."

'Maitreya continued, "The royal sage, Anga, performed a great horse sacrifice. Though they were summoned by learned brahmanas, the gods did not go there. The officiating priests were surprised and told the one who was performing the sacrifice, [1379] 'Though the oblations have been offered, the gods are not accepting them. O king! The oblations are pure and have been collected with devotion. The hymns have also been properly chanted by those who are firm in their vows. We do not know of the slightest bit of disrespect that we have shown to the gods. As a result of this, the gods have

witnessed the sacrifice, but are not accepting their shares.' Hearing the words of the brahmanas, Anga, the performer of the sacrifice, was greatly distressed. With the permission of those who were present in the assembly, he broke his vow of silence and asked them. 'Though asked, the gods have not come to the sacrifice. They have not accepted their shares. O leaders of the assembly! Tell me. What offence have I committed?' The leaders of the assembly replied, 'O lord among men! You have not committed even a trifling crime. However, you did commit a sin in your former life. That is the reason you still don't have a son. O fortunate one! O king! Therefore, strive to obtain an excellent son. Desiring a son, worship the lord of sacrifices and he will grant you a son. When Hari, the lord of sacrifices, is directly invoked for the sake of an offspring, all the residents of heaven will accept their respective shares. Hari confers all the objects of desire that men wish for. However, the fruits that a man obtains depends on the way the worship is carried out.'

'"So that the king might obtain offspring, the brahmanas determined this. They offered cakes to Vishnu in the form of Shipivishta. [1380] A being arose. He was adorned in golden garlands and sparkling garments. He held a golden vessel with cooked *payasam*. [1381] With the permission of the brahmanas, the king accepted the rice in his cupped palms. The generous one smelt it and happily gave it to his wife. It had the power to deliver a male child. The queen accepted it from her husband and ate it. She didn't have any children. But she conceived, and at the right time, gave birth to a son. Since his childhood, this son was devoted to his maternal grandfather, Mrityu. [1382] Because he was born from this portion of adharma, he was devoted to adharma. Wielding a bow and arrow, the wicked one would go on a hunt to the forest and kill the distressed deer. Therefore, people would exclaim, 'This is Vena.' [1383] He was extremely terrible and merciless. While playing in the playground with boys who were his age, he would kill them, as if he was slaughtering animals. On seeing this, the king tried to restrain him with many kinds of punishment. However, unable to control him, he became extremely miserable. 'Householders who do not have offspring have probably worshipped the gods. [1384] That is the reason they do not have to bear the

hardship caused by wicked children, which is so difficult to bear. The great fame of men is destroyed because of this wicked adharma. There are quarrels with everyone and there is never ending hardship. Such a person is a son only in name, bound by the bonds of delusion. What learned man will show respect towards a person who causes hardships in the home? However, I think that a bad son who is the source of grief is superior to a good son. Because of the terrible hardship he causes at home, a mortal person loses all attachment towards his home.' Thus, the king was miserable in his mind. He could not sleep. He arose in the night. While Vena's mother was asleep, unnoticed by men, he abandoned his house and his great prosperity, and left. The subjects got to know that their detached lord had left. They were filled with great grief. The priests, advisers and large number of well-wishers searched everywhere on earth for him. However, he was as hidden as Purusha inside the heart of an imperfect yogi. They could not find the footprints of the lord of the earth. Therefore, they gave up the attempt and returned to the city. O Pourava! With tears in their eyes, they honoured the assembled rishis and told them that their master had disappeared."'

Chapter 4(14)

'Maitreya said, "Bhrigu and the other sages looked towards the well-being of the people. They saw that in the absence of someone to protect them, men would be the same as animals. The ones who knew about the brahman summoned Sunitha, the mother of a brave one. Though the ordinary people did not approve of this, they instated Vena as the lord of the earth. On hearing that Vena, who was extremely fierce and uncontrolled, had ascended on to the throne, all the bandits immediately hid themselves, like rats scared of a snake. Having ascended the throne, the king became insolent and thought he possessed the eight kinds of prosperity. [1385] He took himself to be great and insulted those immensely fortunate ones. He became blind with insolence. He was as proud as an elephant uncontrolled by a goad. He travelled astride his chariot and made the earth and the sky tremble. Everywhere, he

used drums to make an announcement. 'O brahmanas! You will not perform sacrifices and offer oblations. No donations will be given.' In this way, dharma was restrained.

'"The sages witnessed the evil conduct that Vena was engaged in. Thinking of the hardships faced by the people, they were full of compassion and assembled at a sacrificial arena. 'Alas! Like a piece of wood that has been ignited at both ends, people are facing a great hardship from both sides, from bandits and from the protector. Even though he did not deserve to be a king, there was the fear of not having a king. There was a danger then. But now, how can people be made safe? He is like a snake who has been nourished with milk, even though he causes harm to the one who nourishes him. Born from Sunitha's womb, Vena is naturally vile. Though he was appointed to protect the subjects, he is causing violence to subjects. Therefore, we must seek to pacify him. Otherwise, the sin will touch us too. Though we knew that Vena was wicked in nature, we made him the king. If he does not accept our words and continues to follow adharma, we will have to pacify him. He has already been scorched by the censure of the people. We will burn him down with our own energy.' Having decided this, the sages concealed their rage. They approached Vena and addressed him in conciliatory tones. The sages said, 'O noble king! Understand what we are telling you. O son! This will enhance your lifespan, prosperity, strength and deeds. Men who follow dharma in words, thought, body and intelligence and confer freedom from grief on people are bestowed with infinite worlds where there is freedom from attachment. O brave one! Therefore, do not destroy the signs of peace among the subjects. If this is destroyed, the king falls down from his state of prosperity. O king! If a king protects his subjects from wicked advisers and thieves, and protects them, accepting the taxes, he obtains delight in this world and in the world after death. The illustrious lord of sacrifices must be worshipped in the kingdom and in the city and people must follow their own dharma, according to their varna and their ashrama. O immensely fortunate one! The illustrious creator of beings, the one who is the atman of the universe, is pleased with a king who thus follows his instructions. When the lord of the lords is satisfied, what can not be obtained

in this universe? Indeed, the worlds and the guardians of the worlds devotedly render him offerings. When the brahmanas perform sacrifices in your kingdom, the gods, who are Hari's portions, are also properly worshipped through these observances and are extremely satisified. They give what is desired. O brave one! You should not try to show them disrespect.' Vena retorted, 'All of you are foolish. You respect adharma as dharma. You are abandoning the husband who provides you sustenance and worshipping a paramour. Foolish people show disrespect towards a king, who is the embodied form of the lord. Such people do not obtain any benefit in this world or in the next. Vishnu, Virinchi, Girisha, Indra, Vayu, Yama, Ravi, [1386] Parjanya, Dhanada, Soma, Kshiti, [1387] Agni, the lord of the waters, these and other gods who possess the power to grant boons and curse, exist in the king's body. The king is full of all the gods. O brahmanas! Therefore, forget all envy and use your rites to worship me. Bring me the offerings. Other than me, which other man can have the first share in sacrifices?' In this way, his intelligence was crooked and he was following a wicked path. Since he had deviated from everything auspicious, though he was entreated, he did not pay attention to what they sought.

'"O Vidura! Priding himself on his learning, he thus insulted the brahmanas. Since their wishes had been shattered, they became angry with him. 'Let him be killed. This wicked one should be slain. His nature is extremely terrible. If he remains alive, it is certain that he will soon reduce the world to ashes. He is wicked in conduct and does not deserve to be seated on an excellent throne meant for a king among men. He is without shame and criticizes Vishnu, the lord of sacrifices. Having obtained this kind of prosperity because of his favours, who but Vena will be so inauspicious as to vilify him?' The sages decided to kill him and manifested their rage. Since he had criticized Achyuta, he was already dead. But they slew him through their *humkara*. [1388] After this, the rishis left for their own hermitages. Sunitha grieved. However, she preserved her son's dead body with her knowledge and yoga. [1389]

'"On one occasion, the sages bathed in the waters of the Sarasvati. Having offered oblations into the fire, they sat down on the banks of the river

and began to converse about auspicious accounts. They saw many kinds of omens manifest themselves, signifying terror to the worlds. 'Because there is no protector, may the earth not suffer from any misfortune on account of bandits.' While the rishis were reflecting on this, a dust arose in all the directions. This was caused by a large number of thieves running around, engaged in plundering. There was no protector. Knowing this, they tried to kill each other and plundered the riches of people, thus causing this disturbance. Without a king, a country loses its spirits and is generally full of thieves. Though the people saw this sin being committed, they were unable to do anything. 'A brahmana should be impartial in outlook and peaceful. However, if he ignores the afflicted, his powers ebb away, like water from a pot with a hole in it. The lineage of the royal sage, Anga, does not deserve to perish. This king's lineage was invisible in its valour and sought refuge with Keshava.' Having determined this, the rishis churned the dead king's thigh with force and a man named Bahuka arose. [1390] He was as dark as a crow and his limbs were extremely short. His arms were small and his chin jutted out. His arms were short and his nose was flat. His eyes and hair were coppery red. He bowed down to them and humbly asked, 'What will I do?' O son! They asked him to sit and he became Nishada. [1391] The descendants of Nishada roamed around in mountains and forests. He took upon himself all of Vena's sins."'

Chapter 4(15)

'Maitreya said, "After this, the brahmanas again churned the arms of the king, who had no son. A male and a female were born. The rishis knew about the brahman and knew that the couple was born from the illustrious one's portion. They were extremely satisfied and said, 'This one [1392] is a portion of the illustrious Vishnu, the protector of the world. And this one [1393] has been born as a portion of Lakshmi, who is never separated from the supreme being. This man will be the first king and his fame will be extensive. This great king will be named Prithu, because his fame will be exten-

sive. [1394] This goddess possesses excellent teeth and is an ornament among all qualities and ornaments. This beautiful one will have the name of Archi and will be attached to Prithu. [1395] Desiring to protect the world, Hari's portion has directly been born through him. And this is Shri, who is inseparable from him, and has therefore been born.' The brahmanas praised him. The best among gandharvas sang his praise. The Siddhas showered down excellent flowers. The celestial women danced. Conch shells, trumpets, drums and kettledrums were sounded in the sky. All the gods, the rishis and large numbers of ancestors assembled there. Brahma, the preceptor of the universe, arrived there, with the gods and the lords among the gods. He saw the signs of the wielder of the mace [1396] on the right hand of Vena's son. Because of the signs of the lotus on the soles of his feet, he [1397] thought that he was Hari's portion. An unobstructed mark of the chakra [1398] is a sign of the Parameshthi's portion. The consecration was undertaken by brahmanas who knew about the brahman. From every direction, people brought ingredients required for the consecration. The rivers, oceans, mountains, serpents, cattle, birds, animals, the sky, the earth and all the creatures brought tribute and assembled. The king was dressed in excellent garments and wonderful ornaments. With his ornamented wife, Archi, he was as resplendent as a second Agni and was instated. O brave one! Dhanada brought him an excellent golden throne. Varuna brought him an umbrella that was as radiant as the moon, dripping with water. Vayu brought him whisks made out of yak hair. Dharma brought a garland that would bring glory. Indra brought an excellent diadem and Yama a staff to be used for controlling. Brahma gave him armour permeated with the brahman. Bharati [1399] gave him an excellent necklace. Hari gave him the sudarshana chakra and his wife bestowed uninterrupted prosperity on him. Rudra gave him a sword with the marks of ten moons. Ambika gave him a shield with the marks of one hundred moons. Soma gave him horses that were made out of amrita. Tvashta gave him a chariot that was the embodiment of beauty. Agni gave him a bow made out of the horns of goats and bulls. Surya gave him arrows that were as brilliant as his rays. The earth gave him sandals that had the power of yoga. The sky brought an offering of collections of flowers. Those who travel in the sky

gave him the knowledge of drama, singing, the playing of musical instruments and the power to disappear. The rishis conferred infallible benedictions. The ocean gave him a conch shell born from the ocean. The oceans, mountains and rivers granted the great-souled one passage for his chariot. The sutas, magadhas and bandis were stationed there and sung his praise.

'"Prithu, Vena's powerful son, understood that he was being praised. He seemed to smile and addressed them in words that rumbled like clouds. Prithu said, 'O amiable sutas, magadhas and bandis! You have spoken about my qualities, but they are yet to manifest themselves in this world. On what basis are these praises being ascribed to me? May they exist in me and may your words not be rendered false. O speakers of sweet words! Therefore, enough of what has been heard. Save them for the future and compose words of praise then. Indeed, when there are discussions about Uttamashloka's qualities, civilized people do not praise contemptible people like me. If a person has the capacity to invoke great qualities in him, why will he allow his followers to praise him, when they are still non-existent? A person who thinks that he might obtain learning in the future, does not realize that his intelligence is crooked and that people laugh at him. Even if powerful people are famous, they do not like their own praise. A generous and humble man censures this. O sutas and others! We are not yet known in this world for any superior deeds. Like a foolish person, how can I engage you to sing my praise?"'

Chapter 4(16)

'Maitreya said, "The singers heard what the king said and their minds were satisfied by his words, which were like amrita. However, urged by the sages, they continued to sing his praise. 'Our description of your greatness has not been enough. You are the noble god, who has used his maya to descend here. Though you have been born from Vena's limbs, the intelligence of lords of speech is bewildered, when they seek to describe your glory. We are interested in hearing about the exploits of the generous Prithu, who has

descended as Hari's portion, and whose account is like amrita. We have been instructed and urged by the sages. We will seek to spread accounts of your praiseworthy deeds. He is foremost among those who uphold dharma. He makes people follow dharma. He protects the ordinances of dharma and chastises those who act in a contrary way. For the welfare of both the worlds, [1400] from time to time, his own body will manifest the different bodies of the guardians of the worlds. At the right time, he will generate riches and at the right time, release them, like the powerful and radiant sun. [1401] Vena's son will be tolerant of crimes, even if he continually suffers from them. He will be compassionate towards beings. Like the behaviour of the earth, he will always be forgiving towards those who are suffering. He is the divinity Hari, who has assumed the form of a king among men. When the god [1402] does not shower down, like Indra, he will protect the subjects who find it difficult to remain alive. He will delight the world with a face that is the embodied form of the moon. His affectionate glances and his bright smiles will render everything beautiful. His path will be difficult to understand and his acts will be mysterious. His intelligence will be deep and he will guard his riches. He will alone be the reservoir of an infinite number of qualities and greatness. Like Prachetas, [1403] Prithu's nature will be hidden from view. He will be impossible to assail and impossible to withstand. Even when he is near, he will seem to be far away. Vena's son, who has arisen from the fire, [1404] will be impossible to overcome. Through his spies, he will see the acts of creatures, whether they are overt or covert. Like the breath of life in bodies, he will be like an indifferent witness. He will not punish those who do not deserve to be punished, even if they happen to be the sons of his enemies. He will punish even his own sons. His punishment will be based on the path of dharma. Right up to Mount Manasa, Prithu's wheel of rule will be unrestricted and will extend to everywhere that the illustrious sun god illuminates with his rays. [1405] Through his own deeds, he will delight the world. Since he delights the minds of the subjects, he will be known as *rajan*. [1406] He will be firm in his vows and will not waver from the truth. He will be devoted to brahmanas and will serve the aged. For all creatures, he will be a refuge. He will bestow honours and

be affectionate towards the distressed. He will revere other men's wives like his own mother. He will treat his own wife like one half of his own self. Towards the subjects, he will be as gentle as a father. He will be a servant to those who know about the brahman. Those with bodies will love him like their own selves. He will enhance the joy of his well-wishers. He will associate with those who are free from all attachments. Against the wicked, his hand will wield the rod of chastisement. He is the illustrious lord of the three worlds himself, who, mysterious in his atman, has made his portion descend. Because of the futile constructs of lack of knowledge, one sees him as manifesting in many different forms. This brave king is a protector and guardian of the earth's sphere, from Mount Udaya onwards. [1407] He will be astride his victorious chariot and with a bow, will circle the sun from the right to the left, just as the sun does. Here and there, kings, along with the guardians of the world, will bring him tribute. Their women will consider him as the original king. Like the one with the chakra as a weapon, his fame will extend. He will be the lord of subjects. To provide a means of subsistence to subjects, this supreme king will milk the earth, like a cow. Playfully, he will use the ends of his bow to shatter the mountains, just as Indra does, and will level the earth. He will twang his own bow, made out of the horns of goats and bulls. When he travels around, he will be impossible to resist. At that time, wicked people will hide themselves in different directions. He will be like a lion with its tail raised up. He will perform one hundred horse sacrifices at the source of Sarasvati. When the hundredth sacrifice is going on, Purandara will steal the sacrificial horse. In his grove, alone, he will meet the illustrious Sanatkumara and will worship him with devotion. He will then obtain unadulterated knowledge and obtain the supreme brahman. Prithu will be extensive in his valour and famous for his bravery. Everywhere he goes, he will hear words and songs about himself. His unrestricted wheel of rule will conquer the directions. With his own energy, he will uproot the stakes of the world. He will be the immensely fortunate lord of the earth, and the asuras and the gods, with Indra, will sing about him.'"'

Chapter 4(17)

‘Maitreya said, “Vena’s illustrious son was thus glorified because of his qualities and deeds. He greeted and honoured them back and gave them whatever they wished for. He honoured the varnas, with brahmanas at the forefront, the servants, the advisers, the citizens of the city and the countryside, the guilds and the ordinary people.”

‘Vidura asked, “The earth can assume many different forms. Why did she assume the form of a cow? When Prithu milked her, who was the calf? How did the milking take place? The goddess is naturally uneven. How did he level her? The horse was meant for a sacrifice. Why did the god steal it? O brahmana! The illustrious Sanatkumara is supreme among those who know about the brahman. When he obtained jnana and vijnana, what destination did the royal sage obtain? O lord! I am devoted to no one other than you and the illustrious Krishna. His auspicious activities are excellent to hear, such as when he resorted to former bodies. I am devoted to you and Adhokshaja. You should therefore tell me about how he milked the earth, in the form of Vena’s son.”’

Suta said, ‘Maitreya was urged by Vidura to speak about Vasudeva’s account. He praised him and, pleased, replied.

‘Maitreya continued, “O dear one! Prithu was instated by the brahmanas and the ministers as a protector of the people. But at that time, the surface of the earth did not yield any food. The subjects were hungry and their bodies were emaciated. They went to their protector and addressed him. ‘O king! Our stomachs are burning with hunger, like fire in the hollow of a tree. You are our lord now and will find a means of livelihood for us. You are our refuge and we have come to you for refuge. O divinity in the form of a lord of men! We are afflicted by hunger, please try to give us some food, before we perish because our store of food is exhausted. As a guardian of the people, you will indeed find a means of sustenance for us.’ Prithu heard the piteous lamentations of the subjects. O best among the Kuru lineage! He thought for a long time about the reason. Using his intelli-

gence, he decided on the course of action. [1408] Enraged, like the destroyer of Tripura, he picked up his bow and arrow and targeted an arrow in the earth's direction. On seeing that he had picked up the weapon, the earth trembled. She adopted the form of a cow and started to run away, like a terrified female deer that is being pursued by a hunter. At this, Vena's son became angry and his eyes turned as red as the rising sun. Fixing an arrow to his bow, he pursued her, wherever she tried to run away. The goddess ran to the directions and the sub-directions and to the space between heaven and earth. But wherever she ran, she saw him pursue her, with the upraised weapon. Just as people cannot avoid death in the worlds, she could not find any escape from Vena's son. Therefore, with a scared and grieving hurt, she returned.

'"She told the immensely fortunate one, 'O one who knows about dharma! O one who is affectionate towards those who seek refuge! Since you have been instated as the protector of all creatures, save me too. That being the case, why do you want to kill a distressed person like me, who has not committed a crime? Since you are regarded as someone who knows about dharma, how can you strike a woman? Even if women commit crimes, people do not strike them. O king! That apart, someone like you is compassionate and devoted to those who are distressed. I am like a strong boat on which the world is established. After having shattered me, how will you sustain yourself and these subjects on the waters?' Prithu replied, 'O earth! Since you have disobeyed my commands, I will kill you. You have taken your share in the sacrifice, but have not given us the wealth. Every day, you eat green grass, but do not yield milk from your udders. Since you are wicked in this way, punishment is indicated. The seeds of herbs were earlier created by Svayambhu. But you are indeed wicked in intelligence. Despite this, you are hiding them within yourself and not releasing them. You are ignoring me. They are lamenting, afflicted and overcome by hunger. I will slice your flesh with my arrows and pacify them. For kings, the slaying of a wicked and self-centred person who is not compassionate towards creatures, regardless of whether the person is a man, a woman or a eunuch, is not considered to be killing. You are insolent and obstinate and have used

your maya to assume this form. I will use my arrows to reduce you to pieces as small as sesamum seeds. I will use the strength of my yoga to sustain the subjects.' He was the embodied form of rage and was like Death personified. The trembling earth joined her hands in salutation and spoke to him. The earth said, 'I bow down to the supreme Purusha. He uses his maya to manifest himself in many diverse forms that are characterized by gunas. I use my understanding to bow down to his true form. He is not affected by material objects, the sense of being a doer and delusion. The creator fashioned me, with the collection of gunas in different kinds of creation, as a resting place for those beings. The self-ruling one has now presented himself, raising his weapon to kill me. Whom will I turn to for refuge? Using his own maya and himself as the only refuge, at the beginning, the inconceivable one created all mobile and immobile objects. Indeed, he is the one who exerts to confer protection. How can a person who is devoted to dharma desire to kill me? The supreme lord is one, but is seen to appear in many different forms because of his maya. It is because of this that even those with cleansed souls find it difficult to realize him. He is the one who created the creator. People can certainly not fathom his deeds. His powers are the cause behind creation, preservation and destruction. Material objects, action, controllers, consciousness and the sense of the atman flow from him. He is the one who manifests and withdraws his powers. I bow down to the supreme Purusha, the cause behind everything. O lord! You have created this universe, the elements, the senses and the inner organs. O one without birth! As the original boar, you raised me out of the waters of rasatala and instated me. You raised me out of the waters and established me, like a boat, desiring to protect the subjects. That valiant form was that of Dharadhara. [1409] For the sake of milk, he now wishes to slay me, holding a fierce arrow. Indeed, people cannot understand the actions of their lords, especially those like me, whose intelligence is confused by maya and the gunas of creation. Confounded, my mind does not comprehend your ways. I bow down to those brave ones who ensure fame.'"'

Chapter 4(18)

‘Maitreya said, “Despite being addressed in this way, Prithu was still angry and his lips quivered. Scared, she steadied herself and spoke again. ‘O lord! Please control your rage and listen to what I have to say. Like a bee, a learned man accepts the essence from everywhere. Whether it is for the welfare of men in this world or in the next world, sages who have realized the truth have prescribed some modes. If one follows the principles that have been instructed earlier properly, with undiluted devotion, one easily attains the objective. Neglecting those, an ignorant person starts to determine his own modes. He deviates and despite trying repeatedly, he does not attain the objective. O lord of the earth! I have seen that the herbs that were formerly created by Brahma were being enjoyed by those who were wicked and were not firm in their vows. Rulers of the world, like you, did not protect me and neglected me. The world became full of thieves. The herbs were meant for sacrifices and I hid them. After a long period of time, within me, those herbs and grains have indeed diminished. Therefore, you should try to extract them through means that have been indicated earlier. O brave one! O mighty-armed one! Think of a calf to whom I am devoted, a vessel for the milk and a person who can do the milking. O one who desires to protect creatures! I will then be milked and yield all the objects of desire as milk. O illustrious one! You will obtain the desired food that will nourish. O king! O lord! Level me, so that when the rainy season is over, the beneficial water that is showered down by the god remains on me.’ The king accepted the agreeable and beneficial words that the earth spoke.

‘“He made Manu the calf and milked all the herbs and grains with his own hand. Everywhere, other learned ones also extracted the essence of everything. As determined by Prithu, others also milked the objects of their desire. O excellent one! The rishis made Brihaspati the calf and their senses the vessel and milked the pure hymns. The large number of gods made Indra the calf and milked soma juice into a golden vessel. This milk gave them valour, energy and strength. The daityas and danavas made Prahlada, the bull among asuras, the calf. In an iron vessel, they milked sura and asava. The gandharvas and apsaras made Vishvavasu a calf. In a vessel that

was the cup of a lotus, they milked the sweet and beautiful art of singing and dancing. The immensely fortunate ancestors made Aryama the calf. Using an unbaked earthen vessel, those divinities of *shraddha* ceremonies devotedly milked kavya. The Siddhas thought of Kapila as a calf. They used resolution as a vessel to milk the siddhis. The vidyadharas milked the knowledge of travelling through the sky. There were others, well versed in maya. They thought of Maya as a calf. Using their will as a vessel, they milked Maya and the extraordinary technique of disappearing. The yakshas, rakshasas, bhutas, pishachas and those who eat raw flesh made the lord of bhutas [1410] a calf. Using a vessel made out of a skull, they milked asava that was made out of blood. In this way, snakes without hoods, scorpions, snakes and serpents made Takshaka the calf. Using their holes as vessels, they milked poison. Herbivores made the bull [1411] a calf. Using the forest as a vessel, they milked green grass. Animals with sharp teeth and predatory beasts made the lion a calf. Using their own bodies as vessels, they milked flesh. Birds used Suparna as a calf and milked movable and immovable creatures. The trees made the banyan tree the calf and extracted their own juices as milk. The mountains made the Himalayas the calf. Using their own slopes as vessels, they milked many kinds of minerals. Every species used the foremost among it as a calf. They had their own respective vessels and their own respective milk. As determined by Prithu, every object of desire was milked from the earth. In this way, Prithu and the others survived on the food the earth provided and each had his own respective food. O extender of the Kuru lineage! There were differences in the vessels used for milking and variations in the milk that was yielded. King Prithu was pleased that every object of desire had been milked. Affectionately, he thought of her as his daughter and loved her like a daughter. Using the ends of his own bow, the king of kings shattered the tops of the mountains. The lord who was Vena's son made the surface of the earth almost level. Thus, like a father, Vena's illustrious son provided a means of subsistence for the subjects. Here and there, as they deserved, he constructed habitations for them. Villages, cities, habitations, many kinds of forts, residences for cowherds, pens for animals, camps, mines, agricultural settlements and vil-

lages on mountains were established. Before Prithu, there was no such planning of cities, villages and other places. Without any fear, here and there, they dwelt happily."'

Chapter 4(19)

'Maitreya said, "The king consecrated himself for one hundred horse sacrifices. This land of Manu, with the Sarasvati flowing towards the east, is known as Brahmavarta. The illustrious Shatakratu saw that Prithu would surpass his own deeds and could not tolerate the great festivities of sacrifices he had undertaken. The lord Hari is the illustrious lord of sacrifices and is present in all atmans. The lord, who is the preceptor of the worlds, was himself present at these. He was accompanied by Brahma, Sharva and the guardians of the worlds and their companions. The gandharvas, sages and large numbers of apsaras chanted his praise. There were the Siddhas, the vidyadharas, the daityas, the danavas, the guhyakas and the others and the foremost among Hari's attendants, Sunanda and Nanda being the chief. Eager to serve him, devotees of the illustrious one, like Kapila, Narada, Datta, [1412] the lords of yoga and Sanaka and the others followed him. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The earth was milked in accordance with dharma and yielded every object of desire. She was milked for every object of desire and satisfied the intentions of the performer of the sacrifice. All the rivers flowed with every kind of taste, milk, curds, food and other dairy products. The large bodies of the trees yielded honey and fruit. The oceans brought stores of jewels and the mountains provided four kinds of food. [1413]

'"The extremely generous Prithu regarded Adhokshaja as his lord. However, the illustrious Indra suffered from jealousy and tried to create impediments. Vena's son, the performer of the sacrifice, was completing the last horse sacrifice, dedicated to the lord of sacrifices. Regarding him as a rival, he [1414] remained invisible and stole the sacrificial animal. The illustrious Atri saw him travelling swiftly through the sky, like a heretic pretending to be someone detached, like a confused person taking adharma to be dharma.

Urged by Atri, Prithu's maharatha son pursued him. Intending to kill him, he angrily said, 'Wait. Wait.' However, he looked at his form. His hair was matted and he was covered with ashes. Therefore, taking him to be the embodied form of dharma, he did not release his arrow. When he returned without killing him, Atri again urged him, 'O son! Kill the one who is destroying the sacrifice. This is the great Indra, worst among the gods.' Thus urged, Vena's grandson became angry and followed him through the sky, like the king of eagles [1415] pursuing Ravana. The self-ruling one [1416] gave up the form he had assumed and vanished, abandoning the horse. The brave one seized his own animal and returned to his father's sacrifice. O lord! The supreme rishis saw the extraordinary deed that he had done and gave him the name of Vijitashva. [1417] The lord Hari [1418] created a terrible darkness and stole the horse again, severing the golden rope with which it was tethered to the ring on the sacrificial post. Atri showed that he was travelling swiftly through the sky. Since he was carrying a skull and a *khatvanga*, the brave one did not obstruct him. [1419] However, when Atri urged him, he angrily affixed an arrow. The self-ruling one gave up the form he had assumed and vanished, abandoning the horse. Virashva [1420] seized the horse and went to the place where his father's sacrifice was being held. Since that time, those who are weak and ignorant have assumed the disguise that was used by Hari. [1421] Desiring to steal the horse, Indra assumed these forms. These sinful signs and marks are known as *khanda*. [1422] Wishing to destroy the sacrifice of Vena's son, Indra stole the horse in this way. He assumed and discarded the disguise of men who are heretical in intelligence. They are naked, or dress themselves in red garments. They propagate false dharma as dharma. Since they are accomplished and eloquent, people who are misguided are generally attracted to these.

'"The illustrious Prithu was extensive in his valour. Knowing about Indra, he became angry and affixed an arrow to his upraised bow. The officiating priests saw that he had affixed an invincible and forceful arrow, with a desire to kill Shakra. They restrained him. 'O immensely intelligent one! It has been instructed that nothing other than the sacrificial animal should be killed here. We will summon Indra, the lord of the Maruts, who sought to

destroy your objective, here. Because of your energy, he has already lost his powers. O king! Using mantras that have never been used before, we will thereafter offer the one who caused you injury as an oblation.' O Vidura! They advised the master of the sacrifice [1423] in this way. Using the sacrificial ladle, the enraged officiating priests started to offer him as an oblation. However, Svayambhu restrained them. 'Indra should not be killed by you. He is known as Yajna because he is part of the illustrious one's body. You wish to kill him, but the gods who are worshipped are also parts of his body. O brahmanas! Indra performed the act of trying to obstruct the sacrifice undertaken by the king. Regard this as a great transgression of dharma. Prithu has performed one less than one hundred sacrifices, but let him be more famous than Indra.' 'Enough of sacrifices, which you have performed well. [1424] You know about the dharma of liberation. O fortunate one! You should not succumb to rage any longer. Both you and the great Indra are embodied forms of Uttamashloka. O great king! Do not worry. [1425] Respectfully listen to my words. If a man thinks of doing something, but it is frustrated by destiny, when his mind succumbs to great anger, he enters the darkness of ignorance. Since the gods have created obstructions, let this sacrifice be stopped. Indra created the heretics who caused a transgression of dharma. These heretical views, which people find attractive, have been created by Indra. Look at the way he stole the horse and caused an obstruction to the sacrifice. You have descended on this world as a saviour of dharma among people, appropriate for the age. Because of Vena's wicked activities, those practices have disappeared. O Vena's son! That is the reason you have been born as Vishnu's portion. O lord of subjects! Consider the resolutions of the creator of the universe and fulfil them. Indra's maya is the mother of many kinds of wrong dharma. O lord! Destroy the terrible path of the ascetics.' Thus instructed by the preceptor of the worlds, the lord of the earth affectionately had an alliance with Maghona. [1426] Prithu, the performer of a lot of deeds, had the bath that is taken at the end of a sacrifice. Satisfied at the way the sacrifice was undertaken, the granters of boons [1427] conferred boons on him. O Kshatta! Respectfully, the king first honoured brahmanas. Having obtained dakshina, they were content and showered benedictions on him.

‘O mighty-armed one! All of us have come here because we have been invited by you. [1428] We have been worshipped, honoured and have been given gifts—the ancestors, the gods, the rishis and men.’”’

Chapter 4(20)

‘Maitreya said, “Satisfied with the performance of the sacrifice, the illustrious Vaikuntha, the lord of sacrifices and the one who enjoys sacrifices, arrived there, along with the Lord Maghavan. He told him [1429] the following.

‘“The illustrious one said, ‘O dear one! This one has caused an obstruction to your hundredth horse sacrifice. But he is asking you for forgiveness. Therefore, you should pardon him. O lord of men! In this world, the best among men are virtuous and extremely intelligent. Since the atman is not the body, they are not malicious towards other creatures. [1430] If men like you are confounded by divine maya, the long period of serving the aged becomes futile exertion. A learned person knows that this body is the creation of ignorance, kama and karma. That being the case, a person in whom knowledge has been generated, has no attachment towards it. If a learned person is not attached to the body, why will he have a sense of ownership towards things that result from it—a house, children and riches? The atman is one and pure. It is self-resplendent and nirguna, though it is a store for the gunas. It is not covered by anything and goes everywhere. It is a witness and there is nothing that is superior to the atman. If a man knows that his atman is within himself, he is established in me. He is not affected by Prakriti and its attributes. O king! If a person follows his own dharma and always worships me devotedly, without any motive, his mind gradually obtains gratification. Such a person discards the gunas and is impartial in his outlook. He obtains unadulterated tranquility in me. Like the brahman, he is indifferent and obtains kaivalya. He is indifferent towards whatever controls material objects, the senses of perception and action and the mind. He fixes himself on the atman and realizes it, obtaining fortune. The linga sharira

consists of different kinds of flows of the gunas, which causes material objects to interact with each other. [1431] Bound in affection towards me, learned people do not react to prosperity or adversity. O brave one! Such a person conquers all the senses and is indifferent towards happiness and unhappiness and looks upon the superior, the medium and the inferior impartially. Having been appointed by me, offer protection to the entire world, accompanied by all the people. A king obtains benefit by protecting the subjects and in the next birth, obtains a one-sixth share of the good deeds they perform. However, if he is only a collector who receives taxes and fails to protect the subjects, he loses his good merits and obtains the sins. [1432] In this way, if you accord prominence to dharma and follow what has been sanctioned by the best of brahmanas, you will be the best among those who protect. You will be loved by people and in a short period of time, you will see the Siddhas come to visit you in your house. O Indra among men! Ask for any boon from me. Because of your qualities and good conduct, I am tied to you. I cannot be easily obtained through sacrifices, austerities and yoga, but can be obtained by those who are indifferent in their intelligence.' Vishvaksena, the preceptor of the worlds, instructed the conqueror of the world in this way. He bowed his head down and accepted Hari's commands. Ashamed of his own deeds, Shatakratu affectionately touched his feet and he gave up all enmity and embraced him. Prithu worshipped the illustrious atman of the universe with offerings. He seized his lotus feet and his devotion gradually increased.

'"The one with eyes like the petals of a lotus was about to leave. However, he looked at him with compassion and lingered on. Since he loved virtuous people, he did not leave. Because his eyes were overflowing with tears, the original king could not see him. Since his voice choked with tears, he could not say anything. He joined his hands in salutation and stood there, embracing Hari in his heart. He then wiped away the flowing tears and saw Purusha standing before him, his feet touching the ground and the top of his hand resting on the enemy of serpents. [1433] Prithu was not satisfied and said, 'O lord! The lords who grant boons result from your boon. Confused by the transformation of gunas within his own self, which learned person will seek

a boon from you? O lord! O bestower of kaivalya! Embodied beings who go to hell also enjoy them. I will not ask for these. O protector! If I can taste the asava of your lotus feet, which flows from the hearts of great ones and emerges through their mouths, I do not desire any of that. Give me the boon of ten thousand ears so that I can hear about your glory. O Uttamashloka! Emerging from the mouths of great ones, drops of the nectar from your lotus feet are borne by the wind. It again brings back memory to those who have forgotten about the true path, the bad yogis. This restoration is sufficient boon for us. O one who knows about qualities! If one can manage to hear about the excellent account of your auspicious fame in an assembly of noble ones even once, unless he is an animal, which person will desire a cessation of that? Even Shri wishes to receive the accumulation of your qualities. I hanker to worship the complete Purushottama, who is a reservoir of qualities, just as the one with the lotus in her hand [1434] does. Since we are competing for the same master, let there be no quarrels between her and me. We are both single-minded in our attention to your feet. O lord of the universe! Even though we wish to perform a little bit of this worship, the mother of the universe [1435] may be angry with us. But you are extremely devoted to the distressed. Since you possess your own powers, why are you content with her? Virtuous people worship you in this way and dispel the confusion that is created by maya and the gunas. O illustrious one! We do not know if virtuous people have any other motive than that of remembering your lotus feet. I think your words confound the universe. You have told your devotee, "Ask for a boon." If people are not bound by what has been said in your words, who will be confused and perform the rites? [1436] O lord! People are separated because of your maya. An ignorant person desires everything other than his atman. Just as a father himself acts for the welfare of his child, you should also act on our behalf.' The one who sees the entire universe was thus worshipped by the original king and replied, 'O king! You will remain devoted towards me. You will possess the good fortune of acting with your intelligence immersed in me. You will cross over my maya, which is so very difficult to cross. O lord of subjects! Therefore, without any distractions, carry out my commands. People who act in accordance with my in-

structions, obtain benefits everywhere.' He honoured the words spoken by Vena's son, the royal sage, who worshipped him. Having shown him his favours, Achyuta made up his mind to leave. Since his mind looked on all of them as manifestations of the lord of sacrifices, the king joined his hands in salutation and devotedly worshipped the divine rishis, the ancestors, the gandharvas, the Siddhas, the charanas, the serpents, the kinnaras, the apsaras, the mortals, the birds and all the other kinds of creatures with sweet words. Worshipped thus, all of them followed Vaikuntha. The illustrious Achyuta robbed the hearts of the royal sage and the priests and returned to his own abode. He had revealed himself to the king, who bowed down to the one who cannot be seen and is not manifest, the god of the gods. After this, he went to his own city."'

Chapter 4(21)

'Maitreya said, "It [1437] was decorated with pearls, flowers, garlands, silk garments and golden arches. Here and there, it was embellished with great fragrances and incense. The highways, quadrangles and roads were sprinkled with water mixed with sandalwood and aloe and beautified with flowers, unhusked grain, fruits, minerals, parched grain and lamps. There were pillars of plantain trees and clean areca nut trees with fruits and flowers. Everywhere, it was decorated with garlands made out of the tender leaves of trees. The subjects received him with collections of lamps and an infinite number of auspicious objects. There were beautiful maidens ornamented with sparkling earrings. There were the sounds of conch shells and drums. Officiating priests chanted sounds of the brahman. The brave one was devoid of pride. Praised in this way, he entered his residence. Here and there, immensely illustrious ones honoured him and he honoured back the inhabitants of the city and the countryside, happily giving them whatever would please them. He was the greatest of the great and right from the beginning, had repeatedly performed many unmatched tasks. He ruled the globe of the

earth and obtained pervasive fame, eventually ascending to the supreme state."'

Suta said, 'Kousharava praised the original king, who possessed great fame because of a large number of qualities, qualities that were praiseworthy. At this, Kshatta, the great devotee of the illustrious one, praised the master of the assembly [1438] and spoke to him. Vidura said, "Prithu was instated by the brahmanas and obtained a great deal of praise from the gods. He was radiant because of Vaishnava energy and used his hands to milk the earth. What experienced man will not listen to his deeds? All the other kings and the guardians of the world survive on his valour even now, obtaining their wishes. Tell me about his auspicious deeds."

'Maitreya continued, "He resided in the region that was between the rivers Ganga and Yamuna. Desiring to exhaust his store of good deeds, he enjoyed only what had matured. [1439] Everywhere, in all parts of the land, in the seven dvipas, he alone was the one who wielded the rod of chastisement. [1440] The only ones who could counter him were those born from lineages of brahmanas and those who were from Achyuta's gotra. [1441] Once, he consecrated himself for a great sacrifice. O excellent one! The residents of heaven, brahmana rishis and royal sages assembled there. There, everyone was honoured according to what he deserved. In the midst of the assembly, like the lord of the stars amidst the stars, he stood up. He was tall and his arms were thick. He was fair. His eyes were like red lotuses. He possessed an excellent nose and a handsome face. He was amiable and his shoulders were rounded. His teeth and his smile were beautiful. His chest was broad and his loins were wide. His beautiful stomach had three lines, like the leaf of a banyan tree. His shining navel was deep, like a whirlpool. His thighs seemed to be made out of gold and his insteps were arched. The hair on his head was fine, curly, glossy and dark. His throat was like a conch shell. He wore two extremely expensive silken garments, a lower garment and an upper garment. Because of the rituals he had followed, many beautiful signs could be seen on his body. He had cast aside his ornaments. He was attired in black antelope skin. With a blade of kusha grass in his hand, he performed the required rites. He glanced around with eyes that were like stars

in a sky wet with dew. He spoke to the assembly in a loud voice and delighted them. The words were beautiful, clear and with colourful quatrains, deep and certain in their import. It was as if he was saying this for the sake of everyone's welfare.

'"The king said, 'O members of the assembly! O fortunate ones! Listen to me. You virtuous ones have assembled here. If virtuous people ask about dharma, a person must answer according to his own learning. In this world, I have been instated as a king who wields the rod of chastisement over subjects. I must protect their respective means of subsistence and establish their separate ordinances. Those who know about the brahman speak about worlds. If I perform my tasks properly now and if the one who sees everything is pleased, I will obtain my objects of desire there. If a king collects taxes and does not instruct subjects about dharma, he forfeits his own good fortune and shares in the sins committed by the subjects. O subjects! Therefore, for the sake of your own benefit and as a funeral offering towards your master, [1442] you must turn your intelligence towards Adhokshaja. That will be a favour to me. O unblemished ancestors, gods and rishi! Please approve of what I am saying. After death, equal fruits are obtained by the doer, the preceptor and the approver. O supreme among worthy ones! There are some who hold that there is a lord of sacrifices. Otherwise, in this world and in the next, how can there be worlds [1443] that are as radiant as the moonlight? [1444] Manu, Uttanapada, King Dhruva, the royal sage Priyavrata, my paternal grandfather Anga and others like Aja, [1445] Bhava, Prahlada and Bali have held that the wielder of the mace exists. With the exception of those like Mrityu's daughter's son, [1446] who deserves to be pitied, who are confused about dharma, it has generally been held that there must be a cause behind material objectives, [1447] heaven and emancipation. If an ascetic has the intention of serving at his feet, the impurities of intelligence accumulated through many births, which increase day by day, are instantly cleansed, as if by the river [1448] that emerges from the toes on his feet. The valour of such a man is enhanced and with all his impurities cleansed, his non-attachment and vijnana increase. He does not undergo the cycle of life, the source of hardships. Therefore, according to your occupations, minds, words, bodies,

gunas and own deeds, worship him without any reservations. His lotus feet yield the objects of desire. Convinced that this will yield benefits, depending on your abilities, you will then obtain success. He is devoid of gunas, but he manifests himself as a sacrifice with qualities of many different kinds of material objects, traits, rites and chants. Such a sacrifice is accomplished with diverse signs and names. Though his own form is made out of pure concentrated consciousness, he accepts such sacrifices. The aggregate of material nature, time, hopes and dharma in physical bodies leads the consciousness to accept these. The lord visualizes different manifestations of the fruits of these rites, just as, depending on the qualities of the wood, the fire blazes inside it. Hari is the preceptor and lord of those who receive shares in sacrifices. [1449] I am fortunate that those who have an association with me are showing me their favours by worshipping him incessantly on the surface of the earth, following their own dharma and firm in their vows. The devotees of the unvanquished one and noble brahmanas who possess tolerance, austerities and learning are resplendent. Let the energy and great power of royal lineages not seek to surpass them. Hari is the ancient Purusha and even that divinity is always devoted to brahmanas. It is by worshipping at their feet that he obtained Lakshmi, who never leaves him, fame and the supreme greatness that purifies the universe. He completely rules himself and resides in all hearts. The lord of every kind of desire loves brahmanas and is content when they are served. Therefore, humbly and with all your souls, serve brahmana lineages. That is supreme dharma. By continually having an association with them and serving them, a man can immediately achieve satisfaction of the soul and automatic personal serenity. Among those who accept the oblations of clarified butter, is there any superior mouth? The infinite one accepts oblations of clarified butter that are offered faithfully, using the mouths of those who indeed know about the truth. The one who does not abandon his devotees is not that pleased with oblations offered into the mouth of the fire, rendered without consciousness. A brahmana's purity is eternal because of his faith, austeries, auspiciousness, silence, control and concentration. His insight illuminates the true objective, like the reflection in a mirror. O noble ones! Right up to the end of

my life, I wish to bear on my crown the dust from the lotus feet of those who illuminate. This quickly destroys all sins. One must worship those who possess all the qualities. A person who has acquired good qualities, is a store of good conduct, is grateful and is a refuge for the aged, certainly obtains prosperity. I wish that the lineages of brahmanas, cattle and Janardana and his followers should be satisfied with me.'"

'Maitreya continued, "When the king said this, the ancestors, the gods and the brahmanas were satisfied and delighted in their minds. Those virtuous ones applauded his virtuous words. The learned saying, 'One can conquer the worlds through a son', is true. Though the wicked Vena was slain through the curse of brahmanas, he overcame the darkness. Because he censured the illustrious one, Hiranyakashipu was also about to enter darkness, but was delivered because of the influence of Prahlada, his son. 'O noble and brave one! [1450] O father of the earth! May you live for an eternal number of years, since you display this kind of devotion towards Achyuta, the lord of all the worlds. O one who is auspicious in deeds! With you as our protector now, it is as if Mukunda is our protector. Your words have described the divinity, Uttamashloka Vishnu, who is devoted to brahmanas. O protector! However, this is not extraordinary, since you rule over living creatures. You are devoted to your subjects and your nature is great and full of compassion. O lord! On account of our past deeds and touched by destiny, we were wandering around, with our insight destroyed. It is wonderful that you have made us cross this increasing darkness. O one with an elevated spirit! O glorified person! Through your own energy, you maintain brahmanas, kshatriyas and vaishyas. We bow down to you.'"'

Chapter 4(22)

'Maitreya said, "When the citizens were praising Prithu, whose valour was pervasive, four sages arrived there and they were as radiant as the sun. With his followers, the king saw those unblemished lords of the Siddhas, whose radiance illuminated the worlds, descend from the sky and recog-

nized them. Just as the lord of senses rushes towards the objects of the senses, Vena's son was eager to see them and instantly stood up, along with all his followers who were there at the assembly. They were worshipped in the proper way and accepted the offerings and the seats. Completely overpowered by their glory, he [1451] humbly lowered down his head. He took the water that had washed their feet and sprinkled it over the hair on his head. He was good in conduct and with his conduct, accorded them respect. They sat down on those golden seats, like sacrificial fires on altars. Delighted and full of devotion and control, he addressed Bhava's elder brothers. [1452]

'"Prithu said, 'O reservoirs of everything auspicious! This is wonderful. Since I have been able to see you, who even yogis find it difficult to see, I must have performed auspicious deeds. If brahmanas like you, and Shiva and Vishnu who follow you, are pleased, what will be difficult to obtain in this world and in the next? Even though you roam the worlds, people cannot see you, just as the omniscient cause of everything is in all atmans, but cannot be seen. Even if a householder possesses no riches, he is certainly blessed if the master of the house and his servants have water, grass and land in the house, which can be used to honour worthy and virtuous ones who visit. However, even if a house possesses every kind of wealth in abundance, if it does not have sacred water with which the feet of those whose feet are like tirthas can be washed, that house is like a tree inhabited by venomous serpents. O best among brahmanas! Welcome. Since childhood, you have followed vows of emancipation. Your conduct has been faithful and persevering. Because of our own deeds, we have descended into these hardships. O protectors! We have taken the satisfaction of the senses as the objective. Can there be welfare for us? Since you find delight in your own atmans, there is no need to ask questions about your welfare. Your minds and intelligence are such that the question of good fortune and misfortune does not arise. Therefore, I confidently look on you as well-wishers of those who are tormented and am questioning you. How can welfare be ensured quickly? It is evident that the illustrious one, who has no birth, shows favours towards his devotees and manifests his atman in the atmans of those like you, who roam around in the form of Siddhas.'"

‘Maitreya continued, “Prithu’s words were full of meaning, brief, spoken well and sweet. Hearing what he had said, Sanatkumara smiled slightly. Delighted, he replied.

‘“‘Sanatkumara said, ‘O great king! With the welfare of all creatures in your mind, you have asked an excellent question. You are learned. [1453] The intelligence of the virtuous is like this. When two virtuous ones meet each other, it is good for both. The resultant conversation and questioning enhances every person’s tranquility. O king! You mention an attachment for speaking about the qualities of the lotus feet of Madhu’s enemy. This unwavering devotion is extremely difficult to find. It washes away the impurities of lust and desire that exist in the inner recesses of the heart. The sacred texts have perfectly considered the causes for human welfare and have arrived at definitive conclusions—non-attachment to everything other than the atman and firm attachment to the atman and the *nirguna brahman*, devotion, the observance of dharma towards the illustrious one, inquiry about the adhyatmika, faith in yoga, worship of the lord of yoga, continuous listening to auspicious and sacred accounts, reluctance to associate with those who seek gratification in wealth or in the senses, avoiding and not accepting objects that such people seek for gratification, love for solitude, except at times when the nectar of Hari’s qualities can be drunk, non-violence, following the conduct of paramahamsas, remembering Mukunda, drinking the best of nectar in the form of his exploits, yama, niyama, refraining from slander, lack of desire towards objects in this world, tolerance of the opposites, [1454] repeated filling up of the ears with a recital of his qualities, bending down before him, unadulterated detachment towards apparent existence and non-existence and easy devotion towards the nirguna brahman. If a man has unwavering love for the brahman, through a preceptor, he obtains knowledge and non-attachment. Just as a fire burns down the source of its birth, [1455] the power of these burns down the impotence of the heart and the sheath of the subtle body, which consists of the five subtle elements. When this sheath is burnt down, he is liberated from all the differences that existed between the jivatman and the paramatman and from the gunas. This is like a man who sees his dream destroyed in front of him. He can then see himself,

the objects of the senses and what is superior to both of these. A man thus sees nothing other than what has been designated as the truth. It is because of differences that a reflection is seen differently in water and in something else. [1456] When differences do not exist, a man sees no difference between himself and someone else. If one is attracted to the objects of the senses, the mind thinks about them and is agitated. Consciousness and intelligence are lost, like canals draining out water from a pond. One can no longer remember one's consciousness. Knowledge is disturbed and memory is destroyed. When these are obstructed, the wise say that the atman itself has been lost. In this world, there is nothing more destructive of a man's self-interests than loving something that is an impediment to self-realization of the atman. For men, thinking about wealth and the objects of the senses destroys all other objectives. With both jnana and vijnana destroyed, he enters immobile births. [1457] Those who wish to cross the terrible darkness must never be attached to anything. That is an impediment towards attaining dharma, artha, kama and moksha. Among these objectives, moksha is regarded as the most important. The other three objectives are always associated with the fear of Death. Irrespective of being a superior or an inferior creation, [1458] one is affected by the transformations of the gunas. Therefore, there is no peace and the lord [1459] destroys any benefits that may have been obtained. O Indra among men! He is in everything immobile and mobile, covered with bodies, sense organs, the breath of life, intelligence and the ego. He is inside all hearts. He knows about the kshetra and controls it. He is everywhere in the universe. Know the truth that the illustrious one shines everywhere in the universe. Know that you are no different from him. He manifests himself as the one who leads to cause and effect. When intelligence is affected by his maya, a garland appears like a snake, but can be distinguished with clear discrimination. He is always free and pure. He is the unadulterated and pure truth. He overcomes Prakriti, contaminated by karma. Surrender to him. With devotion, enjoy the toes of his lotus feet, which are like petals. Devotees can uproot the firm bonds of karma. Even if a person continually tries to stem the floods of attachment to the objects of the senses, if his mind is not attached to Vasudeva, he does not succeed. Therefore, worship him as

the refuge. Those who have not sought refuge with the lord find this ocean of life to be a great hardship. It is extremely difficult to cross. The six are like crocodiles. [1460] Therefore, you should worship the lotus feet of the illustrious Hari. He is like a boat one can use to cross the hardships that are extremely difficult to cross.'"

'Maitreya continued, "Kumara, Brahma's son, who possessed true knowledge about the atman, instructed him about the path to realize the atman. The king praised him and replied.

'"The king said, 'O brahmana! O illustrious one! Earlier, Hari, who is compassionate towards those who are in distress, showed me his favours. You have now come here to complete the task. You have carried everything out completely. You are as compassionate as the illustrious one. Everything that I possess, including my own self, is a leftover from virtuous ones. [1461] What can I give you? O brahmana! My life, my wife, my sons, my house, my garments, my kingdom, my army, the earth and the treasury—I am offering everything to you. The command of the army, the kingdom, the right to exert the rod of punishment and suzerainty over all the worlds should be given to a person who knows about the Vedas and the sacred texts. A brahmana himself eats, clothes himself and himself gives. Kshatriyas and the other varnas enjoy because of his favours. People like you know about the atman and about the movements of the illustrious one. With a complete understanding of the sacred texts, you have explained these to us. Filled with unlimited compassion, may you always be satisfied with what you yourself do. But for some water cupped in my palms, what can I possibly offer you in return?'"

'Maitreya continued, "They were lords of yoga who knew about the atman and were thus worshipped by the original king. They praised his good conduct and while people looked on, left through the sky. Vena's son, greatest among the great, was firm in what he had learnt about adhyatma. Having realized his own atman, he thought that he had obtained everything. He performed the required deeds, appropriate to the time, the place and his capacity. As was proper and according to his riches, he performed worship towards the brahman. Controlled and without any attachment, he vested all

fruits in the brahman. He took his atman to be beyond Prakriti and only a witness to the action. He remained a householder and his kingdom was full of prosperity. However, like the sun, his mind had no sense of ego and was not attached to the objects of the senses. In this way, engaged in the yoga of adhyatma, he performed his deeds. Through Archi, he had five sons whom he respected—Vijitashva, Dhumrakesha, Haryaksha, Dravina and Vrika. But Prithu alone was the one in whom the qualities of all the guardians of the world were combined. For the sake of protection, from time to time, Achyuta, the creator of the universe, manifests his own self. Amiable in qualities, he [1462] delighted the subjects through his thoughts, words and deeds. The king thus obtained the name that he was a second King Soma. Like the sun, he heated the earth and received only for the sake of giving back wealth. His energy was as invincible as that of Agni. He was as difficult to defeat as the great Indra. He was like the earth in forgiveness. In granting the wishes of men, he was like heaven. Like Parjanya, he showered and satisfied desires. He was as difficult to understand as the ocean. In his spirit, he was like the king of the mountains. [1463] He was like Dharmaraja [1464] in his learning. He was as wonderful as the Himalayas. His treasury was like that of Kubera. In secret treasures, he was like Varuna. In strength, great energy and an ability to go anywhere, he was like Vayu. He was as irresistible as the illustrious god, the lord of the bhutas. [1465] He was as handsome as Kandarpa. [1466] He was as spirited as a king of deer. He was like Manu in his affection towards men. He was like the illustrious Aja [1467] in his lordship. In knowledge of the brahman, he was like Brihaspati. In control of the atman, he was like Hari. In devotion to cattle, preceptors, brahmanas and followers of Vishvaksena, and in modesty, gentle behaviour and trying for others, he was comparable only to his own self. Here and there in the three worlds, men loudly chanted his praise. It entered through the ears of women, just as accounts of Rama do to the virtuous."'

Chapter 4(23)

‘Maitreya said, “On one occasion, Vena’s son, who knew about his own self, saw that he had become old. The lord of subjects ensured unlimited prosperity for everything that he had himself created, [1468] the mobile and immobile objects in the world. He ensured a means of subsistence for those who followed dharma. He had been born for the purpose of accomplishing the commands of the lord and he implemented these. He gave the earth, who was like his own daughter and seemed to be weeping because of the separation, to his sons. The subjects were distressed. Alone, with his wife, he went to a grove. He followed rituals approved of by the vaikhanasas there. With the intensity he had earlier shown in his own conquests, he started austerities. He ate bulbs, roots and fruits. Sometimes, he only ate dry leaves. For some fortnights, he only drank water and ate nothing. For others, he survived only on air. In the summer, the brave one tormented himself with five fires. [1469] During the monsoon, the sage exposed himself to the rain. In the winter, he immersed himself in water up to the neck. He slept on the bare ground. He tolerated these and controlled his senses. He held up his seed and controlled his breath of life. He performed these excellent austerities and worshipped Krishna. Through these, he progressively purified himself. He destroyed the impurities of his store of karma. Through pranayama, he controlled the six categories. [1470] He severed all bondage. He followed the supreme path of adhyatma that the illustrious Sanatkumara had spoken about. Through this yoga, the bull among men worshipped Purusha. Faithfully, the virtuous one followed the dharma of worshipping the illustrious one. His devotion became fixed on the illustrious brahman and on nothing else. Through these perfect activities, his mind was purified and filled with sattva. He only remembered the illustrious one. His sense of knowledge and non-attachment was sharpened. He severed the sheath of the jivatman and all doubts were dispelled. All identification with the body was destroyed and he realized the nature of the atman. He had no desires. Through this knowledge, he severed and gave up the path of yoga too. [1471] If, without any deviation, a person is interested in the exploits of Gaja’s elder brother, he is not attached to anything else. In this way, the foremost among brave ones

engaged the atman with the atman. [1472] Firmly immersed in the brahman, he gave up his own body. He blocked the anus with his heels and pushed up the vital air. He held it at the navel, the heart, the throat and the head, progressively and gradually pushing it up. [1473] He gradually pushed it up to the crown of the head and became free from all desire. He merged the breath of his life with Vayu, his body with the earth and his energy with Agni. In this way, the gaps in his body were merged with space and the liquid parts with water, each division going back to its origin—earth into water, water into fire, fire into air and air into space. The mind was merged into the senses and the senses into the tanmatras, from which, they had evolved. Having merged the objects of the senses and the elements, he merged everything into Mahat tattva. Then he merged this, the source of all gunas, into the being who is full of maya. Through his knowledge, non-attachment and valour, the lord obtained the self-realization of the atman and transcended everything men are subject to. He realized his true nature.

'"His wife, the great queen known by the name of Archi, followed him to the forest. She was delicate and her feet did not deserve to touch the earth. She followed the dharma of being extremely devoted to her husband. She served him and followed him in whatever he subjected his body to. She was not afflicted, nor did she suffer from any torment. She was content with the pleasant touch of her beloved's hand. She noticed that her husband's body had decayed, without any signs of consciousness. She had loved the lord of the earth as much as she had loved her own self. After lamenting for a while, she placed the body on a funeral pyre on the summit of a mountain. Bathing in the water of a lake, she performed the prescribed rites. She offered water to her husband, the performer of generous deeds. She worshipped the gods who were in heaven. Thinking of her husband's feet, she circumambulated the fire thrice and entered it. There were thousands of gods, the bestowers of boons, and the wives of those gods. On seeing that the virtuous lady had followed Prithu, her husband and supreme among brave ones, they praised her. They showered down flowers on the summit of Mandara. While the celestial trumpets were sounded, they conversed with each other. The goddesses said, 'This wife, who served her husband, the

lord of all the kings, with all her soul, is blessed. She is like Shri, the wife of the lord of sacrifices. This virtuous one is certainly headed upwards, following her husband, Vena's son. Behold. Through her inconceivable deeds, Archi is surpassing all of us. Mortals have an uncertain lifespan on earth. However, if they seek the path of liberation at the feet of the illustrious one, there is nothing that cannot be achieved by them. The life of a human on earth is a great opportunity to follow the path of liberation. However, if a man is attached to the hardships that come from pursuing material objects, he deceives himself and is like an enemy to his own atman.' Praised by the immortal women, the wife went to her husband's superior world, obtained by Vena's son, who realized the atman and sought refuge with Achyuta.

'"Such was the extremely great Prithu, an excellent devotee of the illustrious one. He possessed greatness of conduct and I have described his conduct to you. If a person attentively and faithfully reads this extremely pious account, hears it or expounds it, he obtains the status obtained by Prithu. A brahmana obtains the radiance of the brahman, a king becomes the lord of the earth, a vaishya who reads it becomes a master of animals and a shudra obtains a prominent position. After hearing this account thrice, a man or a woman who does not have offspring, obtains excellent offspring and a person without riches obtains the best of wealth. A person whose deeds are not known of obtains great fame. A stupid person becomes learned. This account confers benedictions and counters anything inauspicious faced by men. It brings riches, fame, a long lifespan and heaven, and removes the impurities of kali yuga. Those who desire complete success in pursuing dharma, artha, kama and moksha should listen to it faithfully. This is supreme in accomplishment of the four objectives. A king who is seeking victory should listen to it. The kings will bring tribute in front of him, just as they did to Prithu. As one faithfully hears or reads the auspicious account of Vena's son, one obtains freedom from attachment, unadulterated devotion to the illustrious one and undertakes acts faithfully. O Vichitravirya's son! I have described this great account, which brings greatness. If a mortal person makes up his mind in this way, he obtains Prithu's destination. If a person lovingly listens to Prithu's account or narrates it day after day, he is

freed from attachment. He develops devotion towards the illustrious one, whose feet are like a boat to cross the ocean of life. Such a man develops complete attachment towards him."'

Chapter 4(24)

'Maitreya said, "Vijitashva, the son of Emperor Prithu, was extensive in his fame. He was affectionate towards his brothers and put his younger brothers in charge of the directions. Haryaksha was given the eastern direction and Dhumrakesha the southern. The lord gave the western direction to Vrika and the northern to Dravina. From Shakra he obtained the power of making himself invisible and was thus known as Antardhana. [1474] Through his wife Shikhandini, he obtained three sons who were extremely well regarded. Earlier, these had been the fire gods, Pavaka, Pavamana and Shuchi. They were born in this way because of Vasishtha's curse and using the path of yoga, got back their original status. Through his wife Nabhasvati, Antardhana also had a son named Havirdhana. Though he had known that Indra had stolen the horse, he had not killed him. [1475] He thought that the king's duties, extracting tribute and taxes and using the rod of chastisement, were extremely terrible. Therefore, he abandoned them and undertook a long sacrifice. In the course of this sacrifice, he realized his atman and worshipped the perfect Purusha, the paramatman. Through his meditations, he easily obtained his world. O Vidura! Through his wife Havirdhani, Havirdhana had six sons—Barhishad, Gaya, Shukla, Krishna, Satya and Jitavrata. O extender of the Kuru lineage! The extremely fortunate Barhishad, Havirdhana's son, became a lord of subjects. He immersed himself in rites and in yoga. He continuously sacrificed, and worshipped the gods. The earth was always covered with kusha grass, with the tips of the blades pointing to the east. [1476] On the advice of the god of the gods, [1477] he married Shatadruti, the daughter of the ocean. She was beautiful to behold, charming in all her limbs, but was still young. At the time of the marriage, adorned in beautiful ornaments, she circumambulated Agni, who fell in

love with her, as he had done with Shuki. [1478] The gods, the asuras, the gandharvas, the sages, the Siddhas and the serpents were captivated by the bride, when the directions tinkled with the bells on her anklets. Through Shatadruti, Prachinabarhi had ten sons. All of them had the same name. All of them observed identical vows. All of them were immersed in dharma. They were the Prachetas. When their father commanded them to have children, they entered the ocean and performed austerities there. They worshipped the lord of austerities [1479] for ten thousand years. Along the path, they had met Girisha and had pleased him. Controlling themselves, they meditated, chanted and worshipped according to what he had said."

'Vidura asked, "Along the way, how did the Prachetas meet Girisha? O brahmana! Pleased, what did Hara tell them? Tell me the import. O brahmana rishi! For embodied beings, a meeting with Shiva is indeed extremely difficult. The sages meditate, desiring such a meeting. The illustrious Bhava is satisfied within himself. However, for the maintenance of the worlds, he travels around, with the terrible Shakti."

'Maitreya continued, "The virtuous Prachetas accepted the words of their father. Firm in their minds about performing austerities, they left for the western direction. They saw an extremely large and extensive lake that was almost like an ocean. It was full of sparkling water and as clear as the mind of a great person. There were blue and red water lilies born from the water, lotuses that bloom in the night and blue lotuses. There were the sounds of swans, cranes, chakravakas and karandavas. There were creepers and trees and their body hair seemed to stand up in joy at the humming of the crazy bees. As if at the time of a festival, the wind flung up pollen from the lotuses in all directions. The princes were astounded to hear the divine singing of gandharvas, pleasant to the mind. Drums and kettledrums were being played. They saw the three-eyed Shitikantha emerge from the lake, with his attendants. The best among immortals was being praised by the followers of the gods. [1480] They saw his excellent face, ready to grant favours. Filled with curiosity, they bowed down before him. The illustrious Hara removes the afflictions of those who are afflicted and those who are devoted to dhar-

ma. Because of their knowledge of dharma and their good conduct, he was pleased. Delighted, he spoke to them.

‘“The illustrious Rudra said, ‘You are the sons of Vedishad. [1481] I know what you wish for. O fortunate ones! It is to show you favours that I have revealed myself to you. The illustrious and supreme Vasudeva is beyond the three gunas that living entities are characterized by. [1482] Anyone who seeks refuge directly with him is loved by me. If a man is devoted to his own dharma, after one hundred births, he reaches Virinchi. If he goes beyond that, he obtains me. If he does not deviate and is devoted to the illustrious one, he obtains the Vaishnava world, which gods like us obtain after the universal destruction. You are devoted to the illustrious one. I love you as much as I do the illustrious one. Those who are devoted to the illustrious one do not love anyone as much as they love me. This is a special chant, sacred and extremely auspicious. It brings great benefit. I will recite it for you. Listen.’”

‘Maitreya continued, “With kindness in his heart, the illustrious Shiva, who was devoted to Narayana, said this, while the princes joined their hands in salutation.

‘“The illustrious Rudra said, ‘Victory to you. [1483] You are most noble among those who know about the atman. You are auspicious. May I be blessed. You are the perfect one who should be worshipped. You are in all atmans. I bow down before you. I bow down before the one who has a lotus in his navel. You control the subtle elements and the sense organs. You are the tranquil Vasudeva. You do not change. You illuminate yourself. I bow down to Samkarshana, the subtle and invincible destroyer. I bow down to Pradyumna, who awakens the universe and is inside every atman. I bow down. I bow down to Aniruddha, the one who controls the mind and the sense organs. I bow down to paramahamsa, the complete one who is not affected. I bow down to the one who is the gate to heaven and liberation, the one who is always present among those who are pure. I bow down to the one with the golden seed, the one who gives power to the four kinds of officiating priests. I bow down to the one who provides energy to the ancestors, the lord of the three [1484] and the seed of the sacrifice. You are the one who

provides satisfaction to all living beings. I bow down to the one who is in all atmans. You are the one who is the body of all beings and all the diverse material objects. I bow down to the one who is the protector of the three worlds and the lord of prowess and strength. Your signs reveal every kind of meaning. You are the sky. I bow down to the one who is inside and outside. I bow down to the immensely radiant one who provides all the auspicious worlds after death. You are pravritti and nivritti. You are the rites towards the gods and the ancestors. I bow down to the one who is Death, the one who provides misery as a consequence of adharma. I bow down to the one who is the lord of all benedictions. You are Manu. You are the cause of everything. I bow down to Dharma, the great one. You are Krishna, the infinitely intelligent one. You are the ancient Purusha. You are the lord of samkhya and yoga. You are the store of the three kinds of capacity. [1485] You are Mrida, [1486] the lord of ahamkara. You take the forms of knowledge and eagerness to act. I bow down to the one who manifests himself in different kinds of speech. Show yourself to us. We wish to see you in the form in which devotees worship you. Your agreeable form has all the senses and the gunas and is most loved by those who are devoted to you. Your form is gentle and dark, like clouds during the monsoon. You are an accumulation of everything that is beautiful. Your four-armed form is graceful. It is excellently shaped, with a handsome face. Your eyes are like the inner petals of a lotus. Your eyebrows are beautiful and your nose is excellent. Your teeth are beautiful and your forehead is handsome. You are adorned with symmetric ears. Your sidelong glances are affectionate and you seem to smile. Your flowing locks enhance your beauty. Your shining yellow and silk garments are like the filaments of a lotus. You are adorned with dazzling earrings. Your diadem, bracelets, necklace, anklets and girdle sparkle. You look even more beautiful because of the conch shell, chakra, mace, lotus and a garland of excellent jewels. Your shoulders are like those of a maned lion. You wear the extremely fortunate Koustubha around your neck. Shri is never distanced from you and surpasses the radiance of the stone used to test for gold. [1487] His acts of puraka and rechaka lead to a ripple in the three lines on the stomach, which is as beautiful as the leaf of a banyan tree. The deep and

whirling eddy in his navel seems to withdraw the universe into it. Your hips are dark blue and are covered with a yellow and silken garment, with a golden girdle atop it. Because of symmetric and beautiful feet, shanks, thighs and insteps, you are extremely handsome. The nails on your feet are as beautiful as the petals of an autumn lotus. Their radiance dispels all the impurities that are inside us. So as to destroy all hardships, reveal your own form. O preceptor! You are the refuge. As a preceptor, reveal the path to those suffering from darkness. Those who desire purification for themselves must meditate on this form. While they perform their own dharma, bhakti yoga brings freedom from fear. All embodied beings find it extremely difficult to reach you, but those who are devoted can obtain you. Even the king of heaven seeks you. You can be obtained by those who single-mindedly seek self-realization. You are extremely difficult to worship and even the virtuous find it hard to reach you. But for single-minded devotion at your lotus feet, what external object can be desired? Death destroys the universe with a movement of his eyebrows, displaying his valour and prowess. But even he does not dare to destroy someone who has completely surrendered to you. A momentary association with those who are devoted to the illustrious one is superior to heaven, or being freed from rebirth on earth. What other benediction can a mortal person desire? Your lotus feet are praised as a tirtha. Bathing there, internal and external impurities are cleansed. [1488] Let there be benedictions for those who are extremely good in conduct. Grant us the favour of an association with them. If a person's intelligence is not bewildered by external objectives and if he is not stuck in the cave of tamas, he enters the state of purification. Through bhakti yoga, he obtains the favours and is delighted. Such a sage sees that there is no objective other than you. This universe is your manifestation. You pervade the entire universe. You are the supreme brahman. Like the sky, your resplendence extends everywhere. Using your maya, you created many kinds of forms. You are also the one who maintains and without acting, you are the one who destroys. You are eternal and not affected, but you create this sense of differentiation. O illustrious one! We know that you are the one who controls your own self. With devotion, learned yogis, who pursue action and pro-

cesses, [1489] worship you for success. The Vedas and the tantras state that you are the one who controls the elements, the senses and the mind. You are the original being, with your capacity dormant. You divide it into sattva, rajas and tamas. From this is evolved Mahat, ahamkara, space, fire, wind, water and earth, the gods, the rishis and the large number of creatures. As your own portions, you used your own powers to create and enter the four types of beings. [1490] This is known as the Purusha who exists within, who enjoys the senses, like honey collected by bees. All these worlds are extremely terrible in their force. In the course of time, you are the one who destroys them, like a dense mass of clouds dispelled by the irresistible wind. This is your true nature in beings, but beings can only infer it. [1491] Those who are mad think loudly about what should be done. In a desire for material objects, their avarice increases. Without being distracted, as death, you seize them suddenly, like the flickering tongue of a hungry snake that grabs a rat. Which learned man will neglect and discard your lotus feet in favour of a decaying body? Our father [1492] worshipped you without any hesitation and so unhesitatingly, did the fourteen Manus. For those who are learned, you are our brahman and our paramatman. The universe is scared of Rudra. But you are the destination who grants freedom from fear. O fortunate ones! O sons of a king! Perform your own dharma and purifying yourselves, chant this. Worship the illustrious one as a refuge. You are the atman who is inside all beings. You are established in all beings. Chant and worship him. Incessantly meditate on Hari. I have instructed you about the chant known as *yogadesha*. O ones who observe the vows of sages! Remember it. Control your intelligence. All of you should study this respectfully. In ancient times, the illustrious lord and creator of the universe taught us, Bhrigu and the other sons, this. They were entrusted with the task of creation and desired to create. When all of us, the lord of subjects, were instructed to create subjects, this destroyed the darkness and we were able to create different kinds of beings. Therefore, a man must always attentively chant this, being devoted to Vasudeva. He will then swiftly ensure well-being. Knowledge that leads to supreme benefit is best among all kinds of learning. This knowledge is like a boat that crosses the ocean of hardship, which is so very

difficult to cross, and achieves happiness. I have chanted this song, a prayer to the illustrious one. If a person studies this faithfully, he will worship Hari, who is so very difficult to worship. From him, a man will quickly obtain everything that he desires. When he chants my song, the single lord will be extremely delighted and will bestow everything beneficial. If a mortal person wakes up at the right time and joining his hands faithfully, hears it or makes it heard, he is freed from the bondage of action. O those who bring delight to the king! My song is a prayer to the supreme being, the paramatman. Chanting this with single-minded attention is a great austerity. If you practise this, at the end, you will obtain everything that you wish for.'"'

Chapter 4(25)

'Maitreya said, "The illustrious one instructed the sons of Barhishad in this way and was worshipped by them. While those princes looked on, Hara instantly disappeared. All the Prachetas immersed themselves in water and performed austerities for ten thousand years. They chanted the prayer recited by the illustrious Rudra. O Kshatta! In his mind, Prachinabarhi was attached to various rites. Narada, who knew the truth about adhyatma, took pity on him and sought to wake him up. 'O king! What benefit do you desire for the atman by performing these acts for fruits? The end of unhappiness and obtaining happiness are the best benefits. But those cannot be obtained through these.' The king replied, 'O immensely fortunate one! I do not know what is superior to these. My intelligence is entangled in these rites. Tell me about unadulterated knowledge, so that I can be freed from these rites. As a householder, one is engaged in deceitful acts, pursuing sons, wives and riches as objectives. Such foolish people roam around on the road of samsara and do not attain the supreme.'

'"Narada said, 'O king! O lord of subjects! Behold the animals being slaughtered at your sacrifice. Thousands of large numbers of living beings are being killed mercilessly. They remember your cruelty and are waiting.

When you die, their rage will be aroused and they will pierce you with their horns. In this connection, I will tell you about an ancient history. This is about Puranjana's conduct. Listen attentively to my words. O king! There was a king named Puranjana and his fame was extensive. He had a friend named Avijnata, since his activities could not be detected. [1493] Searching for a refuge, the lord wandered around the entire earth. He could not find anything that appealed to him and he became distressed in his mind. He desired to satisfy his desires and did not think that any of the cities on earth were good enough to satisfy what he was after. On one occasion, on the southern slopes of the Himalayas, he saw a city with nine gates and it possessed all the auspicious marks. [1494] There were ramparts, gardens, mansions, moats, windows and arches. There were many houses everywhere and the tops of the houses were made out of gold, silver and iron. There were assembly halls, quadrangles, highways, gambling houses, markets, dwelling houses, decorations of flags and festoons, places without trees [1495] and platforms. Outside the city, there was a grove filled with celestial trees and creepers. There was a lake filled with the calling of birds and the humming of bees. The banks of the lake were beautiful because of trees. Their branches fluttered because the cool breeze brought with it spray from waterfalls and the fragrance of flowers. The forest was filled with many animals. However, these didn't cause an impediment because they followed the vows of sages. [1496] Travellers thought they were being invited by the calling of cuckoos. He saw a beautiful woman there, wandering around as she pleased. There were ten servants with her and each was the husband of one hundred wives. [1497] In every direction, she was guarded by a serpent with five hoods. [1498] She could assume any form at will. She was young and was searching for a husband. Her nose was excellent. Her teeth were excellent. She was young, with an excellent forehead. Her face was beautiful. Her ears were symmetric, ornamented with shining earrings. Around her beautiful hips, the maiden [1499] wore a yellow garment, with a golden girdle atop it. When she walked, like a resident of heaven, the anklets on her feet tinkled. Her breasts were rounded, with the signs of youth and with no space between

them. As she walked like a female elephant, out of shame, she covered them with the end of her garment. Her smile was bashful and charming.

"""Her sidelong glances were like arrows shot from the bow of her eyebrows. The brave one was smitten by love and addressed her in gentle words. "O one with eyes like the petals of lotuses! Who are you? Whom do you belong to? Where have you come from? O timid one! What do you wish to do in this city? Tell me. Who are the ten great warriors who follow you? Who is the eleventh? O one with the excellent eyebrows! Who are these women? Who is the serpent preceding you? Are you Hri, Bhavani or the goddess of speech? [1500] Wandering like a sage in this forest, are you searching for a husband? Has he satisfied all his wishes at your lotus feet, which are desirable? Are you the one who resides on a lotus [1501] and has the lotus been dislodged from your hand? O one with the beautiful thighs! Since your feet touch the ground, you cannot be any of these. With me, supreme among brave ones and glorious in his deeds, you should decorate this city, just as Shri ornaments the supreme world, along with the lord of sacrifices. Your bashful and sidelong glances have excited my senses. Your smiles and eyebrows have bewildered me. Touched by you, the illustrious Manobhava [1502] has agitated me. O beautiful one! Show me your favours. Your face is charming, with the excellent eyebrows. Your eyes have excellent pupils. Your face is encircled by locks of bluish-black hair. O one with the beautiful smiles! Because of your shyness, you are not looking at me." Like an impatient person, Puranjana beseeched the woman. She was also bewitched by the brave one. She smiled and greeted him. "O bull among men! We do not accurately know who our creator is. Nor do we know ourselves, or others, our gotras, our names, or who has created us. We know that we exist here now and we do not know anything beyond that. O brave one! We do not know who constructed this city, where we seek a refuge for ourselves. O one who grants honours! These men and women are my male and female friends. When I sleep, they remain awake. This serpent guards the city. O fortunate one! It is good fortune that you have come here. O destroyer of enemies! With my friends, I will provide you with whatever ordinary sensual pleasures you wish to satisfy. O lord! Please reside in this city

with nine gates. For one hundred years, I will bring you all the objects of desire. Accept them. How can I enjoy those with a person who does not know about sexual pleasures, a person who is ignorant about the next world and does not look forward to the future? Such a person is like an animal. One obtains dharma, artha, kama, joy from offspring, immortality and fame in this world, without any sorrow and without any disease. Those who know about kaivalya are ignorant of that. It is said that in this world, the welfare of ancestors, gods, rishis, living beings and one's own self is ensured by a mortal person through the state of a householder. O brave one! You are famous and handsome. Why will a person like me not accept a beloved husband like you? O mighty-armed one! O one whose arms are like the coils of a serpent! Which woman on earth will not be attracted to the idea of being embraced by your arms? Through your favours, you are adequate to remove the hardships of those who are without a protector. You roam around, with your smiling glances." O king! Thus, the couple entered into an agreement there.

""'They entered the city, enjoying themselves there for a hundred years. Here and there, singers praised him in pleasant notes. When it was too hot, surrounded by women, he would enter the lake. Seven of the gates of the city were above and two were below. [1503] All these were for different purposes and the lord used them accordingly. O king! Five gates were to the east, one was to the south, one was to the north and two were to the west. I will describe their names to you. [1504] Khadyota and Avirmukhi were two gates to the east that were fashioned together. [1505] Using these, with his friend Dyumat, he used to go to the region named Vibhrajit. Nalini and Naalini were two gates to the east, fashioned together. [1506] With his friend Avadhuta, he used these to go to the region named Sourabha. The fifth gate in front was named Mukhya. [1507] With Rasajna and Vipana, the king of the city used these to go to the regions named Apana and Bahudana. O king! The southern gate of the city was known as Pitrihu. [1508] Along with Shrutadhara, Puranjana used this to go the region of Dakshina Panchala. The northern gate of the city was known as Devahu. [1509] Along with Shrutadhara, Puranjana used this to go to the region of Uttara Panchala. To the west was the

gate named Asuri. [1510] Accompanied by Durmada, Puranjana used this to go to the region named Gramaka. [1511] To the west was also the gate named Nirriti. Accompanied by Lubdhaka, Puranjana used this to go to the region named Vaishasa. Among the citizens who were blind, there were two named Nirvaka and Peshaskrita. [1512] Though he possessed eyes, the lord used to go and act with them. Sometimes, accompanied by Vishuchina, he went to his inner quarters. When he went there, through his wife and children, confusion, satisfaction and joy would result. With desire in his heart, the ignorant one was thus deceived and attached to action. The king did exactly what his queen desired. When she drank, he would drink liquor and become senseless and intoxicated. When she ate, he ate. When she chewed, he chewed. Sometimes, when she sang, he sang. Sometimes, when she wept, he wept. Sometimes, when she conversed, he conversed. When she chattered, he chattered. When she ran, he ran. When she stood, he stood. When she lay down on the bed, he lay down. When she was seated, he sat down. Sometimes, when she heard, he heard. When she saw, he saw. Sometimes, when she smelt, he smelt. Sometimes, when she touched, he touched. Sometimes, when his wife grieved, he too grieved like a distressed person. When she enjoyed, he enjoyed. When she was happy, he was happy. He was thus captivated by his queen and his nature was deceived in every possible way. Though he didn't wish it, like an ignorant person, he followed her. He was as helpless as a domesticated animal.'"'

Chapter 4(26)

"'Narada said, 'One day, the great archer was astride his chariot, yoked to five horses and was advancing swiftly. There were two shafts, two wheels, one axle, three bamboo poles, five joints between the yoke and the pole, one rein, one charioteer, one seat, two poles for the yoke, five types of weapons, seven bumpers and five kinds of movement. He was adorned in golden ornaments. His armour and inexhaustible quivers were made out of gold. There were eleven commanders and he went to the forest of Pan-

chaprastha. [1513] Proud, he picked up his bow and arrows and wandered around on a hunt. He was greedy for the unsavoury act of hunting. Though she did not deserve it, he abandoned his wife. He followed the conduct of asuras. His heart was terrible and he was without compassion. Using his sharp arrows, in that forest, he killed many forest dwellers. It is decreed that in the waterholes in a forest, a king may kill animals required for a sacrifice, but only as much as is required for the purpose. It is the rule that one should not kill out of greed. O Indra among kings! If a learned man knows and performs acts in accordance with the rules, he is not touched by those acts. However, if a man is overwhelmed by pride and acts in a contrary way, he is bound by those acts. He descends into the flow of the gunas. With his wisdom destroyed, he heads downwards. Arrows whetted on stone mangled the bodies of many with colourful feathers. There was destruction of the distressed ones. Those who had compassion in their hearts found this impossible to tolerate. He killed hares, boars, buffaloes, oxen, [1514] ruru antelopes, porcupines and many other animals, regardless of whether they could be used for sacrifices. After this, he was overcome by exhaustion. Hungry, thirsty and tired, he withdrew and returned to his residence. Having returned, he bathed and ate the appropriate food. All his exhaustion went away. As is proper, he adorned himself with scents, unguents and garlands. Having adorned all his limbs in this excellent way, his mind started to search for the queen. He was content and happy. He was extremely proud and his mind was affected by Kandarpa. He did not see the beautiful one, the mistress of the house of a householder. O Vedishad! Distressed in his mind, he asked the women in the inner quarters. “O beautiful women! As used to be the case earlier, is all well with you and your mistress? Unlike earlier, the prosperity of this household is not attracting me any more, since the house is without a mother and a wife who regarded her husband as a divinity. It is like a shattered chariot. What wise man will reside here, like a miserable person? Where is that beautiful lady? When I am submerged in an ocean of hardships, she saves me. At every step, she illuminates my intelligence.” The women replied, “O lord of men! We do not know why your beloved is behaving in this way. O destroyer of enemies! Behold. Without a

spread, she is lying down on the bare ground." Puranjana saw his own queen on the ground, resembling an avadhuta. He was attached to her and he was crushed. Not knowing the reason, he was filled with great bewilderment. With his heart shattered, he spoke to her in soft and comforting words. However, there were no signs that his beloved was feigning this because of love. The brave one, who knew how to beseech, entreated her in slow words. He touched her feet. Making her sit on his lap, he embraced her and spoke to her. Puranjana said, "O beautiful one! When servants commit an inauspicious act, if their masters do not impose punishment on their wrongdoing, taking them to be their own, the servants do not learn from the punishment and are unfortunate. Punishment is a supreme favour imposed on the servant by the master. O slender one! A person who does not take this to be a friendly act is foolish. You possess excellent teeth and charming eyebrows. Please smile and cast a loving and bashful glance at me. Your dark locks hang down, like a mass of bees. Your beautiful face has a tall nose. O spirited one! Reveal your face to those who are your own. O wife of a brave person! Other than those who are gods on earth, [1515] if there is anyone who has committed an offence against you, I will punish him. I will ensure that he does not obtain freedom from fear and since I am a servant of Muraripu, [1516] will see that he does not obtain happiness in the three worlds or anywhere else. I have not seen your face so faded and distressed, without a *tilaka* mark. [1517] Because of rage, it seems terrible. It is without radiance and without affection. I have never seen your well-formed breasts suffer so much because of grief. [1518] Your lips are like bimba fruit, but they are bereft of their reddish tinge. O loved one! Show me your favours. I have committed a crime. Overwhelmed by desire, I acted on my own and went on a hunt. Suffering from the force of flowery weapons, [1519] I am under your subjugation. My patience has been shattered. Acting according to duty, which beautiful woman will not unite with such a husband?"""'

Chapter 4(27)

“‘“Narada said, ‘O great king! In this way, Puranjani [1520] used her charms to bring Puranjana under her control. She enjoyed herself, finding pleasure with her husband. O king! The queen, the one with the beautiful face, bathed herself well and approached the king, having performed the benedictions. He was content and welcomed her. Embraced by her, he embraced her shoulders. Bereft of his senses, he used loving words to converse with her in private. He did not realize the passing of time, which is so very difficult to cross. Night and day, he was captivated by the lady. The great-minded one was overwhelmed by this confusion. Using his queen’s arms as a pillow, he lay down on an extremely expensive bed. The brave one thought that she was supreme. Overcome by tamas, he no longer understood what was his and what belonged to someone else. [1521] With his senses overcome by the sin of desire, he pleasured with her. O Indra among kings! His youth passed away, as if it was but half a kshana. O king! Through Puranjani, Puranjana had eleven hundred sons. However, half of his life was over. O lord of subjects! In this way, through Puranjani, he had eleven hundred daughters and they brought fame to their father and mother. They possessed good conduct and noble qualities. The lord of Panchala [1522] wished to extend the lineage of his fathers. He had his sons married to wives and his daughters were married to grooms who were their equals. Each of those sons had a hundred sons. In this way, Puranjana’s lineage increased in the land of Panchala. He became attached to material objects and had a strong sense of “mine”. They ended up destroying his riches. He was attached to his home, his riches and those who lived on them. He consecrated himself for terrible sacrifices and rites, at which, animals were killed. Just like you, he worshipped gods, ancestors and the lord of bhutas. Thus, he was attached to his relatives and became inattentive. Those who love women find a certain time [1523] unpleasant and that arrived.

“‘“‘O king! There was a lord of the gandharvas and his name was Chandavega. This powerful one had an army consisting of three hundred and sixty gandharvas. [1524] There were a similar number of gandharva women who were united with them. Some were dark and some were light. Together, they

surrounded the city and plundered all the objects of desire. When Chandavega's followers started to plunder Puranjana's city, the large serpent tried to counter them. The powerful protector of Puranjana's city fought with the seven hundred and twenty gandharvas for one hundred years. However, his friend was fighting single-handedly with many and his strength decayed. At this, his kingdom, city and relatives, were afflicted and filled with great anxiety. However, with his companions in Panchala, he [1525] was like a person who subsisted on the honey of the city. He had been conquered by a woman. Since tribute was brought to him, he did not realize the fear. O Barhishad! Kala had a daughter. [1526] Desiring a husband, she roamed around in the three worlds. However, no one wished to accept her. Because of her misfortune, she was known in all the worlds as Durbhaga. [1527] Satisfied with the royal sage, Puru, she once granted him a boon. [1528] On one occasion, I had come down from Brahma's world to earth. Though she knew that I was following a great vow, [1529] overcome by desire, she sought me. She became extremely angry with me and invoked a curse on me, extremely difficult to withstand. "O sage! Since you have refused me, from now, you will not be able to remain at the same place for a long time." Her wishes were not satisfied. However, instructed by me, she approached the lord of the Yavanas, named Bhaya, as her husband. [1530] "O bull among Yavanas! [1531] O brave one! I will accept you. You are the husband I wish for. If living beings make up a resolution about you, it is never rendered unsuccessful. Two kinds of foolish people are lamented about—those who do not give, and those who do not receive, in accordance with the norms laid down in the sacred texts, that is, those who do not desire to follow these modes. O fortunate one! Therefore, since I am offering myself to you, accept me. Take compassion on me. It is the dharma of a man to show compassion towards the afflicted." The lord of the Yavanas heard the words that Kala's daughter had spoken. He wished to carry out the secret task of the gods. He smiled and addressed her. "After thinking about it, I have determined a husband for you. This is despite people disrespecting you and not welcoming you because of your misfortune. Adopt a progress that cannot be detected. This world is determined by karma. Aided by my soldiers, without any obstructions, you will

be able to destroy beings. This is my brother, Prajvara. [1532] Become his sister. Both of you roam around in this world, accompanied by my terrible soldiers, [1533] who cannot be detected.”””’

Chapter 4(28)

‘‘‘‘Narada said, ‘O Barhishad! Bhaya’s soldiers were the agents of destiny. With Prajvara and Kala’s daughter, they travelled around the earth. O king! Once, they used terrible force to lay siege to Puranjana’s city. It was full of objects of pleasure and was guarded by the serpent who had turned old. With her force, Kala’s daughter took over Puranjana’s city. Whichever man was overpowered by her, instantly lost his powers. From all the directions, the Yavanas took possession. They entered through the gates and caused great suffering everywhere in the city. Puranjana was obsessed with himself and was oppressed by them. Attached to his relatives and with a sense of “mine”, he suffered from many kinds of torments. Embraced by the maiden, he lost his beauty. Addicted to material objects, he was miserable. His wisdom was destroyed. He lost his prosperity because of the force of the Yavanas and the gandharvas. He saw that his own city was devastated by the adversaries. His sons, grandsons, followers, advisers and wife were disrespectful and lost their affection. He was himself devoured by the maiden and those in Panchala were tarnished by the enemy. He was overcome by insurmountable thoughts, but could find no means of countering. He still hankered for objects of desire, but he was miserable because the maiden made them seem stale. He did not know what would happen to him. Though he tended to his sons and wive, he lost his affection for them. He was attacked by the gandharvas and the Yavanas and he suffered because of Kala’s daughter. Unwillingly, the king decided to abandon the city. At that time, Prajvara, Bhaya’s elder brother, arrived. Wishing to do what would bring pleasure to his brother, he burnt down the entire city. When it was on fire, the citizens, the attendants, the relatives and the followers suffered from the heat, as did the king. The Yavanas attacked his residence. He was

devoured by Kala's daughter. Prajvara approached the city. The protector of the city [1534] was aggrieved to see this. He was unable to protect the city any longer. Suffering, with great difficulty, he tried to leave, as if he was trying to escape from a fire in the hollow of a tree. But his limbs had become feeble. He had been robbed of his virility by the gandharvas. O king! Confined by his enemies, the Yavanas, he started to weep. There was a little bit left—daughters, sons, grandsons, daughters-in-law, sons-in-law, the home, wealth and belongings. Having been a householder and having accepted notions of "I" and "mine", his intelligence was wicked. The time for separation from his wife arrived and he was miserable. He thought, "While I leave for the next world, my wife will be without a protector. She will grieve over her children. How will she maintain herself? She does not eat until I have eaten. She does not bathe until I have bathed. She is devoted to me. If I am angry, she is extremely scared. When I reprimand her, she is silent. When I do not know, she advises me. When I am not around, she is filled with sorrow. She is the mother of brave sons. How will she sustain the status of a householder? My miserable sons and daughters are dependent on me. When I have left, how will they sustain themselves? They will be in an ocean, with a broken boat." In this way, with a miserable mind, he lamented, though he should not have done so. Having made up his mind to seize him, Bhaya approached him. Like an animal, the Yavanas dragged him away to their own abode. Sorrowing and afflicted by grief, his followers followed him. The serpent, which had also been obstructed, abandoned the city and departed. After this, the city was broken down and became one with nature. He was forcibly dragged by the powerful Yavanas. Overwhelmed by tamas, he did not remember his former well-wisher and friend. [1535] Having been cruel, he had slaughtered many sacrificial animals. They remembered his crimes and angrily sliced him with axes. For many years, he was submerged in a darkness that extended up to infinity. He lost his memory. Having been tainted because of his association with women, he suffered for eternity.

"""Her thoughts had been fixed in his mind. [1536] Therefore, thereafter, he was born in Vidarbha in Rajasimha's house, as a beautiful woman. [1537] Malayadhvaja, the king of Pandya, was a conqueror of enemy cities. He

vanquished the kings and married the princess of Vidarbha through the viryashulka mode. Through her, he had a black-eyed daughter. There were also seven sons who were younger and they became kings of the seven Dravida countries. O king! Each of those sons had millions of sons. Their descendants will enjoy the earth until the next manvantara. Agastya married the daughter who was born first. She was firm in her vows. Dridhachyuta was born from her and he had the sage Idhmavaha as his son. Malayadhvaja, the royal sage, divided up the entire earth among his sons. After this, so that he could worship Krishna, he went to Kulachala. [1538] The princess of Vidarbha, with the intoxicating eyes, abandoned her home, sons and the objects of pleasure. Like moonlight following the moon, she rushed after the lord of Pandya. The rivers Chandravasa, Tamraparni and Vatodaka are there. He always used those auspicious waters to cleanse himself. He subsisted on bulbs, seeds, roots, fruits, flowers, leaves, grass and water. Because of the austerities he resorted to, his body gradually became emaciated. He became impartial in his attitude towards opposites—cold and heat, wind and rain, hunger and thirst, pleasant and unpleasant and happiness and unhappiness. Through austerities, learning, niyama and yama, he burnt up impurities and united himself with the brahman. He conquered his breath of life and consciousness. For one hundred celestial years, he remained in the same spot, like a pillar. He did not have attraction for anyone other than the illustrious Vasudeva. He realized the pervasive atman and all differences within his own atman. Like a witness, he saw everything as if in a dream, and ceased all action. O king! The illustrious Hari directly instructed him as a preceptor. The lamp of pure knowledge, which illuminates all directions of the universe, was ignited in him. He saw the supreme brahman within his own atman and his own atman in the supreme brahman. He gave up his consciousness and withdrew from everything. The princess of Vidarbha looked upon her husband, Malayadhvaja, as supreme among those who knew about dharma. Looking upon her husband as a divinity, she lovingly tended to him and gave up all objects of pleasure. She attired herself in bark and became emaciated because of her vows. She did not braid her hair. Remaining near her husband, she was tranquil, like the flames of a quiet fire.

The maiden did not know that her beloved had given up his body, since he was seated in that steady posture. She conducted herself just as she used to do earlier. However, while she tended to her husband, she could no longer feel the heat in his legs. Her heart became anxious, like a doe that has strayed from the herd. Distressed and without a relative, she grieved. Incapacitated, she sprinkled her breasts with her tears. Alone, she wept loudly. "Arise! O royal sage! Wake up. This earth, with the ocean as a girdle, is terrified of bandits and kshatra-bandhus. You should save it." Having followed her husband to that desolate spot, the lady lamented in this way. She fell down at her husband's feet. She cried and tears flowed down from her eyes. She used wood to build a funeral pyre and placed her husband's body on this pyre. She lit it and, lamenting, made up her mind to follow him in death.

""'There was a brahmana who had realized his atman. He had once been a friend. [1539] O lord! At that time, he arrived there and comforted the weeping one. He addressed her in sweet and assuring words. The brahmana said, "Who are you? Whom do you belong to? You are grieving over the one who is lying down here. Who is he? Don't you recognize me as a friend with whom you used to wander around earlier? O friend! Can you remember your friend Avijnata? You wished to be attached to earthly pleasures. You abandoned me and went in search of that. O noble one! You and I were swans, two friends who resided in Lake Manasa. But for one thousand years, both of us have been separated from our original residences. O friend! Your mind turned to carnal pleasures. You left me and went to earth. While you were wandering around there, you saw a place that was constructed by a woman. There were five gardens, nine gates, one protector, three chambers, six families and five marketplaces. It was made out of the five elements and a woman was the mistress. O lord! The gardens are the objects of the five senses. The gates are the nine apertures for the senses. The three chambers are fire, water and earth. The families are the collections of the senses. [1540] The marketplaces are the organs of action, where beings transact according to their capacity and nature. The man is truly the lord of all the powers. However, having entered there, he does not compre-

hend. You were touched by that lady. While you pleasured with her, you forgot all your learning. O lord! Because of your association with her, you have been reduced to this wicked state. You are not the daughter of Vidarbha, nor is this brave one your well-wisher. You are not Puranjani's husband. You have been confined by these nine gates. It is because of the maya created by me that you think of yourself as a man or a virtuous woman. You are neither. Both of us are swans. [1541] Behold our true nature. I am you. Behold. You are no different from me. Those who are wise do not detect the slightest bit of difference between us. In a mirror, a man can use his eyes to see one or two. The difference between us is just like that." In this way, the swan from Manasa obtained knowledge from the swan. He realized his own true nature. He regained his memory, lost because of the separation. O Barhishad! This adhyatma has been explained to you indirectly. That is because the illustrious god, the creator of the universe, prefers to remain indirect.'"'

Chapter 4(29)

"'Prachinabarhi said, 'O illustrious one! We haven't understood your words completely. The wise may be able to comprehend it, but not those like us, who are confounded by karma.'

"'Narada replied, 'Know that the being Puranjana creates a city for himself—with one leg, two legs, four legs, many legs, or no legs. [1542] The friend of the being, described as Avijnata, is the lord himself. Living beings cannot know him through names, acts or attributes. When a being desires to enjoy all the gunas of Prakriti, he accepts that nine gates, two hands and two feet are the most appropriate form. One should know the maiden as Buddhi, who creates the feeling of "I" and "mine". With that presiding over the body, the being enjoys the qualities of the senses. The male friends are the senses, who ensure knowledge and action, while the female friends are their conduct. The serpent is prana, with its five kinds of flows. One should know the great commander as the mind, the leader of both types of senses. The

Panchala kingdom is one where one enjoys the five objects of the senses. In its midst is the city with nine gates—the two eyes, the two nostrils, the two ears, the mouth, the genital organs and the anus. Some of them are in pairs. In association with the respective sense, the breath of life goes out through these. The eyes, the nostrils and the mouth are the five gates towards the east. The right ear is considered as the gate towards the south and the left ear as the gate towards the north. The anus and the genital organs are regarded as the two gates towards the west. Khadyota and Avirmukhi are two gates that have been fashioned together. Through these eyes, the lord visualizes form and the region known as Vibhrajit. Nalini and Naalini are the two nostrils and smell is the region known as Sourabha. Avadhuta is the faculty of smelling. The gate Mukhya is the mouth, Vipana is the organ of speech and that of taste is Rasavit. [1543] Apana is the conduct of the tongue, while Bahudana is the many kinds of eatable objects. The right ear is known as Pitrihu, while the left ear is Devahu. The rites of nivritti and pravritti, mentioned in the sacred texts, are known as Panchala. Hearing these, and accompanied by Shrutadhara, one follows the path of the gods or the path of the ancestors. The genital organs are Asuri. Foolish ones addicted to carnal pleasures use this to go to the region of Gramaka. The ability to procreate is spoken of as Durmada and the anus is said to be Nirriti. Vaishasa is hell and the ability to defecate is his friend, Lubdhaka. Hear from me about the two blind ones. For the being, these are the hands and the feet. Using these, he goes and does. The heart is the inner quarters. The mind is known as Vishuchi. Through its attributes, one obtains delusion, contentment and delight. One is made to act by her [1544] qualities and accordingly, one does different things. In this way, though the atman is a witness, it is made to undertake different kinds of activities. The body is the chariot and the senses are the horses. Though one doesn't actually move, the number of years is the span of life. Good and bad deeds are the two wheels. The three gunas constitute the standard. The five joints between the yoke and the pole are the five aspects of prana. The mind is the rein, intelligence is the charioteer, the heart is the seat and opposite sentiments are the two poles for the yoke. The five senses are the five kinds of weapons. The seven bumpers are the con-

stituents of the body. [1545] Akuti [1546] is external motion. Using the eleven types of soldiers of the senses, [1547] a being rushes after a mirage and takes pleasure in commiting the five kinds of killing. [1548] The passage of time was symbolized by the year, Chandavega. He commanded the days, in the form of the male gandharvas, and the nights, in the form of the female gandharvas. There are three hundred and sixty of each and as they progress, they diminish the lifespan. The daughter of Kala is old age herself and no one welcomes her. For the sake of destruction, Mrityu, the lord of the Yavanas, accepted her as his sister. Mental and physical ailments are the soldiers of the lord of the Yavanas. Prajvara stands for the two types of fever [1549] that make living beings suffer. In this way, destiny ensures that a being who is born suffers from many kinds of miseries for one hundred years. In the body, the jivatman is enveloped in darkness. It is nirguna, but the attributes of prana, the senses and the mind are imposed on the atman. It lies down in this bondage of desire and performs acts according to "I" and "mine". The atman does not realize itself, or the illustrious one as the supreme preceptor. Though he is self-luminescent, Purusha surrenders to the gunas of Prakriti. He prides himself on his qualities and, helpless because of this, performs white, black and red acts. [1550] His subsequent birth depends on his deeds. Because of white acts, he sometimes obtains the shining worlds. [1551] Because of black acts, he sometimes obtains regions that are full of terrible unhappiness and grief. Because of the wickedness in intelligence, he is sometimes a man, sometimes a woman and sometimes a eunuch. Depending on the qualities of the deeds, one becomes a god, a human or an inferior species. Suffering from hunger, a miserable dog goes from one house to another house. Roaming around in that way, he obtains punishment or food. Pursuing desire, a being travels on the superior path or the inferior path. Depending on destiny, he experiences pleasure or pain above, below, or in the middle. The living being cannot end sufferings from any of these—destiny, other creatures, or one's own self. [1552] None of these can be countered. This is like a man bearing a heavy burden on his head. He sometimes places the burden down on his shoulder. All attempts to counter are like that. O unblemished one! An act can never be the ultimate counter to any other act.

Both of these are the outcome of ignorance. It is like countering a dream with another dream. In the mind, the linga sharira wanders around in a dream. But in reality, this is non-existent and when the dream is over, it retreats. The being does not realize his atman and confronts a succession of unreal objects. This material existence will cease only if one faithfully resorts to the supreme preceptor. Controlling oneself, one must engage in bhakti yoga to the illustrious Vasudeva. Complete non-attachment and knowledge will then be generated. O royal sage! If one assiduously cultivates the faithful and listens to accounts of Achyuta, these are swiftly obtained. O king! There are places where virtuous and broad-minded devotees of the illustrious one gather to talk about the illustrious one's qualities. One should hear those with an eager mind. The conduct of Madhu destroys flows in every direction from the mouths of those great ones. One should drink that incessant flow of nectar. O king! If one drinks this with an attentive ear and without being satisfied, one will never be touched by hunger, thirst, fear, sorrow or delusion. Those in the world of the living always suffer from many kinds of natural hardships. That is because they are not attracted to accounts of Hari, which are like an ocean of amrita. The lord of the Prajapatis himself, [1553] the illustrious Girisha, Manu, Daksha and the other lords of subjects, Sanaka and the other faithful ones, Marichi, Atri, Angiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Bhrigu, Vasishtha and others who know about the brahman, ending with me, are lords of speech. We have resorted to austerities, learning and meditation, but have even now, not been able to see him through these means. Even when we see him, we do not really see the true nature of the supreme lord. Superior persons may worship the one with extensive strides through chants of the brahman, mantras and other signs. However, his movements are beyond all these and they do not know the supreme one. If a person worships the illustrious one in his heart, he shows his favours. In such cases, the person's mind turns away from the rituals mentioned in the Vedas. O Barhishad! Therefore, do not resort to ignorant acts, expecting fruits from these. The pursuit of fruits is pleasant to the ears. However, it is futile and cannot touch the real purpose. Such people do not know their own world, not to speak of the god Janardana. It is said that

their intelligence is shrouded in smoke and without knowing, they follow the rituals of the Vedas. You have covered the entire surface of the earth with darbha grass, with the points of the blades pointing towards the east. You are proud that you have slaughtered a large number of animals. But you do not know karma and that which is superior to it. Karma is that which satisfies Hari. Knowledge turns the intelligence towards him. Hari is himself in the atmans of living beings and he is the lord of their natures. His feet are the refuge that bring benefit to men in this world. He is the most beloved atman. If one resorts to him, there is not the slightest bit of fear. A person who knows this is learned. For such a learned person, the preceptor is Hari. O bull among men! Your questions have thus been answered. I will now tell you about something that is secret and has been determined. Listen. There is a deer grazing in the refuge of a beautiful garden of flowers. It is grazing on grass and is attached to the doe. Its eyes are eager to listen to the humming of bees. It has not noticed the wolves, which survive on the flesh of others, in front, nor that it is likely to be pierced by the arrows of a hunter from the rear. O king! You should see yourself as the deer whose heart is likely to be pierced. The hunter who is following you at the rear is Death. Undetected, his arrows will rob you of your life. In your state as a householder, you have sought refuge with women, who are like flowers. The satisfaction obtained from acts of desire are as insignificant as the honey and fragrance from flowers. You are thinking of intercourse and the trifling happiness that desire provides to the tongue, or the genital organs. Like the bees, your mind is immersed in the sweet and attractive songs sung by the wife and by other women. You are excessively attracted to the conversations of people. While you are thus submerged, like a pack of wolves, days and nights and special units of time like lava are taking away your lifespan. Yet, you find pleasure in your home. Think of what you are doing as the activities of the deer. Fix your consciousness in the inside of your heart and the proclivities of the sense organs in your consciousness. Abandon this householder stage, associated with women. This is the worst of accounts, about the association between men and women. Gradually, detach yourself and seek the one who is the refuge of hamsas.'

‘“The king replied, ‘O brahmana! O illustrious one! I have heard and considered what you have said. The preceptors did not know about this. If they knew, why did they not tell me? O brahmana! You have severed a great doubt that they had created. Even the rishis are bewildered by the state where the senses cease to function. A man may begin an action in this life, but gives up his body. In the next life and in a different body, he reaps the fruits. Everywhere, those who know about the Vedas talk about this principle and it has been heard. It is said that when an act is performed, it is not directly visible.’ [1554]

‘“Narada said, ‘If an act is begun, a man enjoys the fruits in the next life too. There is no interruption because there is no change in the linga sharira and the mind. When a man lies down, he is sleeping and breathing, but forgets his identity. It is just like that. Action that has been undertaken is enjoyed by a different body. In his mind, a person says, “These are mine. This body is mine.” A man thus accepts the deeds that he has undertaken and this determines the nature of his future birth. One can think of two kinds of consciousness, resulting from the two types of senses. [1555] From the way the consciousness behaves, one can infer the acts undertaken in a former life. Sometimes, we feel something that has not been seen or heard in the present body. Sometimes, in the mind, we see forms that we have not experienced. O king! That is the way the linga sharira determines the creation of the next body. Believe that it must have been experienced before. Otherwise, it would not have touched the mind. The mind indicates the past forms of a man. O fortunate one! It also tells us about who will take birth in the future and who will not take birth. Sometimes, things that have not been seen or not been heard here, are seen by the mind. It must be understood that these have a basis in acts performed in a different place and a different time. All the many acts that progressively come and go are experienced by the mind and the senses. They leave imprints in the minds of people. When the mind is fixed on sattva and one is near the illustrious one, because of the association with him, everything is illuminated. This is like the dark one being seen in the presence of the moon. [1556] As long as a man is not disassociated from notions of “I” and “mine”, the gross body, an accumulation of intelligence,

mind, the senses and their objects and gunas, continues. When a person is asleep or unconscious, when there is fever, or when one approaches death, the flow of the breath of life is obstructed and there is no sense of "I" and "mine". In the womb and in childhood, because the eleven senses [1557] are not fully developed, the linga sharira cannot be seen, just as the moon cannot be seen on the night of the new moon. In the cycle of life, the objects of the senses never withdraw. Even in one's sleep, one thinks about objects of pleasure, or about catastrophes that might happen. The linga sharira consists of five subtle elements, the three gunas and modifications of the sixteen. [1558] When this is united with consciousness, the jivatman is formed. It is through this [1559] that a body is cast off and a new body taken up. This is the way one obtains joy, misery, fear, unhappiness and happiness. A caterpillar does not give up a blade of grass, but moves on. [1560] Like that, even when a person dies, he does not give up the association with the former body. O Indra among men! Like that, until one has obtained another body, one cannot extinguish one's karma. The mind is the reason for creatures being born and not being born. When one thinks about the pleasures from the objects of the senses, one frequently performs many kinds of acts. Because of these deeds, one is ignorant and binds oneself to these acts. Therefore, if you wish to counter the objects of the senses, with all your soul, worship Hari. Behold the universe as being under his control. Creation, preservation and destruction are dependent on him.'"

'Maitreya continued, "The illustrious Narada, foremost among the devotees of the illustrious one, instructed him about the destination meant for hamsas. He then took his leave and went to the world of the Siddhas. Prachinabarhi, the royal sage, instructed his sons about protecting the subjects. He then went to Kapila's hermitage to perform austerities. Free from attachment, with perseverance and single-mindedness, he worshipped Govinda's lotus feet. With this devotion, he achieved tranquility. O unblemished one! The divine rishi himself sang about adhyatma. If a person hears it or narrates it, he is freed from his linga sharira. This account of Mukunda's fame purifies the world. It flowed from the mouth of the noble and divine rishi and sanctifies the atman. If a person recounts it, he obtains Para-

meshthi. Freed from all bondage, he does not circle in the world any more. I have directly heard this extraordinary account of adhyatma. There is no doubt that a man can use this to free himself from association with women."'

Chapter 4(30)

'Vidura said, "O brahmana! Earlier, you have spoken about Prachinabarhi's sons. You told me that they obtained success and satisfied Hari through the prayer sung by Rudra. O Brihaspati's disciple! They obtained the beloved side of the lord of kaivalya, after having met the god Girisha by chance. Did the Prachetas obtain it in this life, or later?"

'Maitreya replied, "The Prachetas wished to follow the instructions of their father. They entered the water, meditated and performed austerities. They thus satisfied the one who creates all living bodies. After ten thousand years were over, the eternal being appeared before them. His beauty calmed and pacified their hardships. He was astride Suparna's shoulder, resembling a cloud atop the summit of Meru. He was attired in yellow garments and wore the gem [1561] around his neck. He dispelled the darkness of the directions. He was adorned with shining gold ornaments. His cheeks and face were radiant. His diadem glittered. He held eight weapons. [1562] He was followed and served by his attendants, sages and the foremost ones among the gods. Like a kinnara, Garuda sung his praise. His eight arms were long and thick and Lakshmi was in their middle, close to his chest. He wore a garland of wild flowers and its radiance rivalled that of Shri. Barhishad's sons surrendered themselves to the supreme being. He glanced compassionately towards them and addressed them in a voice that rumbled like a cloud.

'"The illustrious one said, 'O fortunate ones! O sons of a king! Ask for a boon. Because of your fraternal relationship, all of you are separately following the same dharma. I am satisfied with your brotherly love. If a man remembers you every day at the time of sandhya, [1563] he will love his brothers like his own self and be affectionate towards all creatures. If a person

controls himself and chants Rudra's prayer in the morning and in the evening, praising me, he will obtain every boon that he desires and excellent wisdom. You have happily accepted and followed the instructions of your father. Therefore, your unmatched glory will spread everywhere in the worlds. You will have a famous son, who will not be inferior in qualities to Brahma. He will populate the three worlds with his descendants. O sons of a king! Through Kandu, Pramlocha had a lotus-eyed daughter. [1564] When she was abandoned by her mother, the trees accepted her. She suffered because of hunger. Driven by compassion, King Soma placed his finger in her mouth and this showered down nectar. You have been instructed by your father, who is my follower, to have offspring. Without any delay, marry that beautiful maiden. All of you follow identical dharma and are equal in good conduct. The slender-waisted one will dedicate herself to you. She will be your wife and will exhibit identical dharma and good conduct. Through my favours, your energy will not diminish and you will enjoy the earth for one million celestial years, enjoying divine objects of pleasure. Because of your single-minded devotion to me, you will not be contaminated by any impurities of the gunas. You will not be associated with hell and will obtain my abode. Even if a man is engaged in the householder state, but is accomplished in his deeds and spends all his time on my accounts, it is considered that he is not bound to the householder stage. If a person increasingly fixes Vishnu in his heart, those who know about the brahman say that this is the realization of the brahman. A person who attains this state does not grieve. He is not delighted or confused.'"

'Maitreya continued, "The bestower of the ultimate goal of life, [1565] Janardana, said this. The Prachetas joined their hands in salutation. Having seen him, their impurities of tamas and rajas were destroyed. In faltering words, they prayed to the best of friends.

'"The Prachetas said, 'We bow down before the one who destroys all hardships. We bow down before the generous one whose qualities and names have been enumerated. You are swifter than the speed of thoughts and words. We bow down before the one whose progress cannot be detected through any of the paths. We bow down before the one who is purity and

serenity. You are established in your own position. It is because of the mind that you are manifested in this meaningless appearance of duality. We bow down before the one who creates, preserves and destroys the universe. Through your maya and gunas, you assume different forms. We bow down before the one who is pure sattva. You are Hari. You are the one who destroys the cycle of existence. You are Vasudeva. We bow down to Krishna, the lord of the Satvatas. We bow down before the one with the lotus in his navel. We bow down before the one who wears a garland of lotuses. We bow down before the one whose feet are like lotuses. We bow down before the one whose eyes are like the petals of lotuses. O illustrious one! You are the one who destroys many kinds of miseries and you have revealed yourself to us, who are suffering from hardships. What other kind of compassion can there be? O lord! O destroyer of everything inauspicious! Using our intelligence we must remember you at the right time and conceive you, because it is the truth that you are compassionate towards the distressed. This brings tranquility to creatures, even those who are the most inferior in this world. You are hidden in the inner hearts of everyone. How can you not know what we desire? O lord of the universe! You are the supreme benediction that we desire. O illustrious one! You are the preceptor and the recourse we seek. Show us your favours. O protector! You are the supreme, beyond the supreme. We seek a boon from you. Since there is no end to your powers, you are praised as the infinite one. When the parijata tree is easily obtained, a bee does not frequent any other tree. Since we have directly obtained shelter at your feet, what other boon shall we ask for? As long as we are touched by maya, we will circle around amidst these deeds. In every birth, may we obtain an association with those who are devoted to you. Even for a lava, [1566] we do not regard heaven, or not being born, as comparable to an association with those who are devoted to the illustrious one. What other benedictions can mortals seek? When you are worshipped or talked about, the thirst for material objects is quenched. There is no enmity towards beings and no kind of anxiety there. This is the illustrious Narayana himself, the objective sought by those who have renounced. Those who have been freed from attachment repeatedly praise him through virtuous ac-

counts. Such people roam around your feet, desiring to purify themselves, as at a tirtha. If someone is terrified, why will the assemblage of such devotees not appeal to him? We met the illustrious Bhava, your beloved friend, for a short instant. For those on earth, death is extremely difficult to cure. However, you are an excellent physician and we have now been able to reach you. O lord! Whatever we have studied, whatever good deeds we have always followed to please seniors, brahmanas and the aged, whatever humility we have exhibited towards noble ones, well-wishers and brothers, the lack of envy we have shown towards all beings, whatever excellent austerities we have used to torment ourselves, the fact that we have submerged ourselves in the water and not taken food for a very long time—may all this serve the purpose of your satisfaction. You are the supreme being and this is the boon that we seek. Manu, the illustrious Svayambhu, Bhava and others have purified their hearts with austerities and knowledge. But even they could not comprehend the limits of your greatness. According to our capacity, we chant your praise. We bow down to the one who is impartial and pure, the supreme being. We bow down to Vasudeva, who is sattva incarnate. We bow down to you, the illustrious one.'"

'Maitreya continued, "The Prachetas praised Hari in this way. He was devoted to those who sought refuge and happily granted them what they wished. Their eyes were not satiated from looking at him. Though they did not wish it, the one with unvanquished valour left for his own abode. After this, the Prachetas arose from the water. They saw that the earth was covered with very tall trees that obstructed the space between earth and heaven. They were angry. O king! To remove trees from the earth, like the *samvartaka* fire [1567] at the time of destruction, they angrily exhaled fire and wind from their mouths. They undertook this task of reducing the trees to ashes. On seeing this, the grandfather arrived there and used his reasoning to pacify Barhishad's sons. The trees that remained were terrified. Instructed by Svayambhu, they bestowed their daughter on the Prachetas. Following Brahma's instructions, they married Marisha. Since he had caused an act of great disrespect earlier, the one who had not been born from a womb was now born through a womb. [1568] When Chakshusha manvantara arrives, the

progress of time will destroy the earlier creation. Directed by the god, Daksha will then wish to create subjects. While he was being born, his radiance surpassed the energy of all those who possessed energy. Because he was accomplished in his deeds, he came to be known as Daksha. [1569] The one without a beginning [1570] instated him in the task of creating and protecting subjects. He also engaged others and Daksha was made the lord over all these Prajapatis."'

Chapter 4(31)

'Maitreya said, "After this, because they remembered what had been said by Adhokshaja, vijnana developed in them. [1571] They entrusted their son [1572] to their wife. They left their home. They left for the shores of the western ocean, where Jajali [1573] had obtained success. They initiated themselves into knowledge about the brahman, so that they developed the intelligence to look upon all creatures as their own selves. They conquered their breath of life, their minds, their thoughts and their visions. They mastered the asanas and their bodies were peaceful and upright. They engaged their minds in the supreme and uncontaminated brahman. Narada, praised by the gods and the asuras, saw them. On seeing him come, they arose, prostrated themselves and greeted him. As was decreed, they worshipped him. When he was happily seated, they spoke to him.

'"The Prachetas said, 'O divine rishi! Welcome. It is our good fortune that we have seen you. O brahmana! You move around, ending fear, just as the sun does. We have been instructed by the illustrious Shiva and Adhokshaja. O lord! However, because we have been attached to the householder stage, we have almost forgotten it. Therefore, awaken the knowledge of adhyatma, the insight about the pure truth, in us. We will then easily cross over the ocean of life, which is so very difficult to cross.'"

'Maitreya continued, "The Prachetas asked the illustrious sage, Narada, this. The illustrious one is immersed in Uttamashloka and spoke to the kings.

‘“Narada said, ‘If Hari, the atman of the universe, is served, the birth, deeds, lifespans, minds and words of men are truly successful. There can be three kinds of birth in this world—through semen, through initation ceremonies and through consecration in sacrifices. It is said that there are three kinds of rites. [1574] But what use is this, or a lifespan like that of the gods, to a man? What purpose do learning, austerities, words, control over consciousness, intelligence, skill, strength and the power of the senses serve? What is the use of yoga, samkhya, sannyasa and studying? If a person does not satisfy himself with Hari, what is the point of other superior methods? Among everything, it is true that the atman is the best objective. Among all creatures, Hari, who can give us our atman, is the most loved. Watering the roots of a tree satisfies the trunk, branches and sub-branches. Like that, the nourishment of the breath of life nurtures the senses. Among all kinds of worship, that of Achyuta is the best. Water is generated from the sun and at the right time, enters creatures and mobile and immobile objects on earth. [1575] In that way, the flow of gunas emerges from Hari. This universe is the abode of the supreme atman. Sometimes, the two seem different, like the radiance of the sun from the sun. The senses are awake, but their powers and objects of the senses are dormant during sleep. They do not seem to act. With knowledge, all perceptions of differences melt away. O kings! Clouds, darkness and light appear in the sky, but progressively, also vanish. In this way, the powers and flows of sattva, rajas and tamas appear in the supreme brahman. That unlimited and single atman is in all bodies. He is Time, the cause, Purusha and the supreme lord. He uses his own energy to destroy the flow of the gunas. Worship him with single-minded devotion. If one is compassionate towards all creatures, satisfied with anything and if one pacifies all the senses, Janardana is quickly pleased. He regards himself as being under the control of those who are devoted to him, those who call on him with constant and increasing contemplation. The undecaying one does not move out of the spaces in their hearts. He removes all the impurities in their atmans. He does not accept the offerings of those who are evil-minded. Hari loves those who possess no riches, but know that he is the essence of the wealth they should love the most. There are some wicked people who de-

spise the virtuous because of their learning, riches, noble birth, deads and pride. But he does not accept their worship. Though Shri follows him, he is not attached to her. Nor does he care for the lords of men and gods who regard themselves as self-sufficient. He loves the large number of his servants, who are dependent on him. How can any grateful person give up such a being?'"

'Maitreya continued, "O king! The sage, Svayambhu's son, thus made the Prachetas and others hear the account of the illustrious one and went to Brahma's world. This glory of Hari emerged from his mouth and removed the impurities of the world. Having heard, they meditated on his feet and went to his abode. O Kshatta! I have thus told you everything that you had asked about, the conversation between the Prachetas and Narada and Hari's praise."'

'Shri-Shuka said, "O supreme among kings! The lineage of Uttanapada, Manu's son, has been described to you. Now hear about Priyavrata. He obtained knowledge of adhyatma from Narada, but returned to earth. After enjoying it, he divided it among his sons and obtained the lord's abode. Kshatta heard the virtuous account about the glorious and unvanquished one, described by Kousharava. His delight increased and tears flowed from his eyes. He bowed his head down at the sage's feet and held Hari's feet in his heart. Vidura said, 'O great yogi! You have shown me compassion today. You have shown me the shore beyond the darkness, where Hari can be reached by those who are not interested in trifles.' Having bowed down to him and having taken his leave, Vidura went to Gajasahvya. Though he no longer possessed any desires, he wished to see his relatives and kin. O king! If one hears this account of kings who have offered themselves up to Hari, one obtains a long lifespan, wealth, fame, good fortune, the destination of life and prosperity."'

This ends the Fourth Skandha and Volume 1.

[1] For example, *shloka*s 2.4.10, 4.1.2 and 4.5.11 of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad use the two expressions together.
[2] Chandogya Upanishad, 7.1.2.
[3] *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, F.E. Pargiter, Oxford University Press, London, 1922.
[4] Sutas were bards, minstrels, raconteurs.
[5] Ugrashravas was a suta.
[6] The Critical Edition of the Valmiki Ramayana was brought out by the Baroda Oriental Institute, now part of the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda. The Critical Edition of the Mahabharata was brought out by the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune.
[7] The Bhagavad Gita translation was published in 2006, the translation of the Critical Edition of the Mahabharata in ten volumes between 2010 and 2014 (with a box set in 2015) and the translation of the Critical Edition of the Valmiki Ramayana in 2017. The translations are by Bibek Debroy, and in each case, the publisher is Penguin.
[8] *The Bhagavatamahapuranam*, Nag Publishers, Delhi, 1987. This is a reprint of the Kshemaraja Shrikrishnadass, Venkateshvara Press, Bombay, text.
[9] https://web.archive.org/web/20081012022829/http://www.sub.uni-goettingen.de/ebene_1/fiindolo/gretil/1_sanskr/3_purana/bhagp/bhp1-12u.htm
[10] http://www.ochs.org.uk/research/bhagavata-purana-research-project
[11] *The Bhagavata Purana, Selected Readings*, Ravi M. Gupta and Kenneth R. Valpey, Columbia University Press, 2016.
[12] *Krishna: The Beautiful Legend of God (Srimad Bhagavata Purana Book X)*, Edwin Bryant, Penguin Classics, 2004.
[13] *A Prose English Translation of Srimad Bhagavatam*, Manmatha Nath Dutt, H.C. Dass, Calcutta, 1896.
[14] *Srimad Bhagavatam*, Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, 1970 to 1977.
[15] *The Bhagavata Purana*, translated and annotated by Ganesh Vasudeo Tagare, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi, 1976.
[16] *Srimad Bhagavada*, Swami Tapasyananda, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Chennai, 1980.
[17] *Srimad Bhagavata Mahapurana with Sanskrit Text and English Translation*, C.L. Goswami and M.A. Shastri, Gita Press, 2006.

[18] *A Study of the Bhagavata Purana or Esoteric Hinduism,* Purnendu Narayana Sinha, Freeman and Company, Benares, 1901.

[19] Two of the six Indian schools of *darshana* (philosophy).

[1] Protection and destruction.
[2] With knowledge of the Vedas.
[3] Meaning the three qualities (*guna*) of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*.
[4] This first *shloka* has considerable scope for interpretation. Therefore, translations vary widely, depending on interpretations chosen. We have deliberately kept it simple. Although we have said this about this shloka, the same statement can also be made about all the other shlokas in this first paragraph. Indeed, this can be said about the first three chapters.
[5] Bhagavata Purana.
[6] Vedavyasa, although there is also the belief that it was originally composed by Narayana. Vedavyasa (or Vyasadeva) is more like a title. There is a Vedavyasa in every great age, the title being conferred on someone who collates and classifies the Vedas. This Vedavyasa's name was Krishna Dvaipayana, Krishna because he was dark and Dvaipayana because he was born on an island (*dvipa*). Vedavyasa is the composer of the Mahabharata and the Puranas.
[7] Relating to *adhidaivika* (destiny), *adhibhoutika* (nature) and *adhyatmika* (one's own nature).
[8] The Naimisha forest, or Naimisharanya. There is a play on words, with *animisha* being used as an adjective. We have translated this as open, the obvious meaning. But it has also been interpreted as sacred.
[9] Ugrashrava, the son of Romaharshana or Lomaharshana. A *suta* was a charioteer, but also a bard and raconteur. Here, it is a proper name for Ugrashrava.
[10] Specifically, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.
[11] The author of the Brahma-sutras, identified as Vedavyasa.
[12] Interpreted as knowledge about the physical and the metaphysical.
[13] Vedavyasa's.
[14] The four *yugas* are *satya (krita) yuga, treta yuga*, *dvapara yuga* and kali yuga and dharma progressively declines as one moves down the yugas.
[15] The Yadavas.
[16] Incarnation as *avatara*.
[17] Ganga.
[18] The Ganga does it first-hand, these sages can do it second-hand.
[19] Powers of illusion.
[20] The word used is *pada*, which means step. However, in the context of a shloka, it also means a quatrain, a shloka formed out of four padas.

[21] Balarama.
[22] The supreme soul.
[23] The sage in question is Shuka, the son of Vedavyasa. The reference to the sacred thread needs explanation. The stage (*ashrama*) of *sannyasa* is the fourth stage and one embarks on this after the sacred thread ceremony has been performed, much earlier. However, desiring *moksha*, Shuka left on his pursuit and exile. The grieving Vedavyasa followed him and called out to him. Since Shuka had already merged into everything, only the trees answered back.
[24] Spiritual truth.
[25] Jaya is usually a name for the Mahabharata. But here, it is being used for the Bhagavata Purana. Narayana (one who lies down on the water) is one of Vishnu's names. Nara and Narayana were also ancient sages. In the Mahabharata, Narayana is identified with Krishna and Nara with Arjuna. Sarasvati is the goddess of learning and speech.
[26] Vishnu and Krishna's name.
[27] *Bhakti yoga*.
[28] Vishnu and Krishna's name.
[29] The four classes and four stages of life, respectively.
[30] Places of pilgrimage.
[31] The obvious meaning is the Bhagavata Purana, though indirectly, one might also mean Krishna.
[32] Meaning, one or the other of mind (*mana*), intelligence (*buddhi*) and ego (*ahamkara*).
[33] For present purposes, prakriti can be taken as nature, though it is used in *samkhya* philosophy in a specific sense.
[34] Respectively, Vishnu, Brahma and Shiva, the preserver, the creator and the destroyer.
[35] By implication, Vishnu, since Vishnu is being identified with sattva, Brahma with rajas and Shiva with tamas.
[36] *Ahavaniya, garhapatya* and *dakshinatya* (the fire that burns in a southern direction), the three sacrificial fires.
[37] *Bhuta*s.
[38] Though we have translated it in this way, this is usually interpreted as cause and effect.
[39] The qualities are sattva, rajas and tamas. The possession of qualities leads to manifested forms. The lack of qualities leads to things that are not

manifest.

[40] We have translated *vijnana* as self-knowledge, the transcendental consciousness. We will use *jnana* for knowledge.

[41] The individual soul or *jivatman*.

[42] Kala means part. The sixteen kalas are usually identified as the five organs of the senses (eyes, ears, tongue, nose, skin), the five objects of the senses (sight, hearing, taste, smell, touch), the five elements (earth, air, fire, water, space) and the mind. But this is subject to interpretation and this is not the only possible listing.

[43] The great cosmic principle.

[44] Brahma created Prajapatis, who went on to create other beings.

[45] The form of Purusha. Alternatively, this is also interpreted as the second form of the Purusha.

[46] *Kumara* means youth. These were sages who were born through mental powers, Sanaka, Sananda, Sanatana and Sanatkumara. However, they were not interested in the act of creation.

[47] Celibacy.

[48] There are seven nether regions—*atala, vitala, sutala,* rasatala, *talatala, mahatala* and *patala*. The earth had been dragged down there by the demon Hiranyaksha. To save the earth, Vishnu adopted the *varaha* (boar) incarnation.

[49] Meaning Narada.

[50] Also known as the *Satvata Samhita* or the *Pancharatra Agama*, texts followed by the Satvatas.

[51] Daksha Prajapati had a daughter named Murti and she was married to Dharma. Nara and Narayana were the sons of Dharma and Murti.

[52] Siddhas are sages who have been successful in attaining their objectives.

[53] One of Kapila's disciples.

[54] One of the schools of *darshana* (philosophy).

[55] Anasuya was the sage Atri's wife. Anasuya had three sons, Dattatreya (born as Vishnu's portion), Durvasa (born as Shiva's portion) and Soma (born as Brahma's portion). Alarka was the king of Kashi and Prahlada was the son of the demon Hiranyakashipu. Dattatreya taught both Alarka and Prahlada.

[56] Ruchi was one of the Prajapatis.

[57] Each *manvantara* (era) is presided over by a Manu. Fourteen manvantaras equal one of Brahma's days. In the present cycle (*kalpa*), we are in

the seventh manvantara, presided over by a Manu known as Vaivasvata. However, in the present cycle, the first Manu was Svayambhuva. The rishis, gods and Indra change from one manvantara to another. At the time of Svayambhuva Manu, the title of Indra was held by Yajna, the son of Ruchi and Akuti.

[58] One with long strides, Vishnu's name. As the son of Nabhi and Meru, his name was Rishabha or Adinatha.

[59] King Prithu levelled the earth and made it attractive. Hence, the earth is known as Prithvi or Prithivi, after this name.

[60] The sixth Manu in the present cycle.

[61] The tenth, *matsya* (fish), incarnation.

[62] The *kurma* (tortoise or turtle) incarnation, Mount Mandara was used as the rod for churning.

[63] The physician of the gods.

[64] Mohini means someone who allures and deludes. The gods and the asuras fought over the amrita. Assuming the form of Mohini, Vishnu gave the gods the amrita and deceived the asuras.

[65] Daityas are a specific category of demons, the progeny of Diti.

[66] The half-man half-lion (*narasimha*) incarnation, when Vishnu killed Hiranyakashipu.

[67] Bali, Virochana's son and Prahlada's grandson, dislodged the gods from heaven. Since Bali was generous, Vishnu assumed the dwarf (*vamana*) incarnation and sought the territory that could be covered in three of his steps. In three strides, Vishnu covered the three worlds and Bali was banished to the nether regions.

[68] In the form of Parashurama.

[69] As Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa.

[70] Eighteenth, as Rama, to kill Ravana.

[71] Rama (Balarama) was the nineteenth and Krishna was the twentieth.

[72] The Kikata region is the territory around Magadha. Jina is one of Buddha's names. Alternatively, *jina* may be an adjective, being applied to Shuddhodhana (Siddhartha's father) in the sense of someone who was victorious.

[73] There is a period of conjunction or interregnum between two yugas, referred to as *sandhya* (the twilight zone). This is the sandhya between the present kali yuga and the next satya yuga.

[74] From what is true.

[75] The six characteristics are knowledge, power, strength, prosperity, valour and energy. The six qualities are the five senses and the mind.
[76] The wheel of the chariot, as a metaphor for the *chakra*.
[77] Of life and death.
[78] Shuka.
[79] Act of giving up one's life by fasting to death.
[80] Shuka.
[81] Krishna means Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa. We have deliberately retained the word samhita here. It means a text consisting of a collation of verses.
[82] The expressions used are interpreted in different ways. For instance, *samadrik* (impartial) is interpreted as someone who is impartial between the jivatman and the paramatman and has therefore realized the paramatman/brahman. *Nirvikalpa* (without discrimination) is interpreted as someone who has no sense of duality.
[83] The sleep of ignorance.
[84] When Shuka left in search of liberation, Vedavyasa followed him. Along the way, some naked *apsara*s were bathing. On seeing Shuka, they did not bother. However, on seeing Vedavyasa, they covered themselves. The story is recounted in the Mahabharata.
[85] When Shuka arrived in Hastinapura. Kurujangala is the area around Kurukshetra, Parikshit's kingdom. The capital was Hastinapura, also known as Gajasahvya or Nagasahvya.
[86] Rajarshi means royal sage. Pandaveya means a descendant of the Pandavas and is a term being applied to Parikshit. The Satvata text means the Bhagavata Purana.
[87] By sanctifying it.
[88] Vasavi means Satyavati. Though she was brought up in a fisherman's house, she was actually the daughter of King Uparichara Vasu. Hence, Vasavi. Vedavyasa was the son of Parashara and Satyavati.
[89] The word used is *dvija-bandhu*, meaning those who are brahmanas only in name.
[90] The Mahabharata.
[91] The one who is permanent, Vishnu's name.
[92] Vedavyasa's.
[93] Divine sage.
[94] Dharma, artha, kama and moksha.

[95] Vedavyasa is also identified as the author of the *Brahma-sutra*s.
[96] Brahma.
[97] Vishnu.
[98] Kama and moksha.
[99] Without a desire for the fruit.
[100] The description of Vishnu.
[101] Since they will be misled and will realize the purport of true dharma.
[102] Obtained through material objects.
[103] This can be interpreted as superior and inferior births, or superior and inferior worlds.
[104] Vishnu's name.
[105] Vishnu's.
[106] Alternatively, the gross and the subtle.
[107] This is interpreted as thrice a day, morning, noon and evening.
[108] Adhidaivika (destiny), adhibhoutika (nature) and adhyatmika (one's own nature).
[109] Of birth and death.
[110] Of action.
[111] The path of devotion.
[112] Samkarshana is Balarama, Krishna's brother. Pradyumna is Krishna's son and Aniruddha is Pradyumna's son, Krishna's grandson. However, Samkarshana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha are Krishna's manifestations.
[113] Her affection.
[114] It freed Narada from the bondage of affection.
[115] The sacred fig tree.
[116] Used the jivatman to meditate on the paramatman.
[117] For my death.
[118] Brahma.
[119] Meaning a *mahayuga*, consisting of a cycle of satya, treta, dvapara and kali.
[120] This is interpreted as Brahma's breath.
[121] Vishnu.
[122] The name of Vishnu's bow, made out of horn.
[123] Jujube or berry trees.
[124] Shuka.
[125] This is a reference to the Kurukshetra War, Srinjayas being a term used for those on the Pandava side. Vrikodara is a name for Bhima. Dhri-

tarashtra's son means Duryodhana. Drona's son is Ashvatthama, who killed Droupadi's sons (and others) while they were sleeping in the night. Krishna/Krishnaa is one of Droupadi's names. The Mahabharata says that far from disapproving Ashvatthama's act, Duryodhana applauded it.

[126] Droupadi's.

[127] Duryodhana.

[128] Kiritamali, one of Arjuna's names. Gandiva is the name of Arjuna's bow.

[129] *Brahma-bandhu*, one who is a brahmana only in name.

[130] Krishna was Arjuna's friend and charioteer.

[131] Ashvatthama's father, Dronacharya, was Arjuna's preceptor. Arjuna's standard had an ape (Hanumat) on it.

[132] Rudra is Shiva and Arka is the sun god. A demon named Vidyunmali was favoured by Shiva and obtained a chariot as a boon. However, Arka burnt this chariot down. Enraged, Shiva burnt Arka down. There is a place in Varanasi (named Lolarka) where Arka fell down. Alternatively, the text can also be construed as Brahma (rather than Arka), Ka being one of Brahma's names. When Brahma desired his own daughter, Shiva chased Brahma.

[133] A divine weapon named after Brahma, not to be confused with the *brahmastra*, also a divine weapon named after Brahma.

[134] As a means of purification, water is touched before any deed. The knowledge of a divine weapon meant knowing the mantras to invoke it, release it and withdraw it. However, because Dronacharya thought Ashvatthama was undeserving, he did not teach his son how to withdraw divine weapons.

[135] Jishnu is Arjuna's name. Arjuna spoke to Krishna.

[136] Prakriti.

[137] Artha, kama and moksha.

[138] That is, use your own brahmashira to counter it.

[139] Arjuna.

[140] Krishna.

[141] In the Mahabharata, Arjuna withdraws his own weapon.

[142] Ashvatthama's mother was Kripi, descended from Goutama.

[143] Droupadi.

[144] One of Droupadi's five sons was Arjuna's son.

[145] Ashvatthama.

[146] Krishnaa, Droupadi.
[147] Dronacharya's.
[148] The science of fighting and its sacred texts.
[149] Ashvatthama.
[150] Yudhishthira.
[151] Satyaki.
[152] Arjuna.
[153] Krishna.
[154] The one with four arms, Krishna.
[155] Arjuna's.
[156] Ashvatthama had a gem on his forehead.
[157] Krishnaa, Droupadi.
[158] Krishnaa, Droupadi.
[159] Yudhishthira.
[160] Kunti.
[161] Krishnaa, Droupadi.
[162] Yudhishthira.
[163] The queen means Droupadi and this is a reference to Droupadi being dragged to the assembly hall by the hair. Specifically, this is a reference to Duhshasana.
[164] For King Yudhishthira.
[165] Indra performed one hundred horse sacrifices.
[166] Krishna.
[167] Satyaki.
[168] Addressed to Shounaka.
[169] Abhimanyu's wife and Parikshit's mother.
[170] Uttara was expecting Parkishit at the time. Parikshit would be the only descendant of the Pandavas.
[171] Addressed to Shounaka.
[172] Vishnu's/Krishna's chakra or discus.
[173] Uttara was King Virata's daughter.
[174] Krishnaa, Droupadi.
[175] Nandagopa was the leader of cowherds and reared the young Krishna.
[176] Krishna's name.
[177] Kamsa deposed (and imprisoned) his father, King Ugrasena, and became the king of Mathura. There was a prediction that Devaki's eighth son

would kill Kamsa. Hence, Kamsa imprisoned Vasudeva and Devaki, killed their other children and tried to kill the infant Krishna.

[178] A maharatha is in general a mighty warrior. More specifically, a maharatha is skilled in the use of all weapons and can take on ten thousand warriors single-handedly.

[179] These are incidents from the Mahabharata. Duryodhana tried to poison Bhima and burn down the Pandavas in a fire. The flesh-eaters are *rakshasa*s.

[180] Because of their past actions.

[181] Krishna broke a pot of butter and Yashoda tied him up with a rope.

[182] Krishna was born as a Yadava, in the lineage of Yadu. Punyashloka is interpreted as King Yudhishthira.

[183] Brahma.

[184] The Yadavas.

[185] Meaning, Arjuna's friend. Though relatively rarely used, Krishna is also one of Arjuna's names.

[186] Vishnu's abode, but being used here as a name for Krishna.

[187] Yudhishthira.

[188] An akshouhini is an army, consisting of 21,870 chariots, 21,870 elephants, 65,610 horse riders and 109,350 foot soldiers.

[189] Because Duryodhana was the king, not Yudhishthira.

[190] Yudhishthira.

[191] Devavrata is Bhishma and the place of destruction means the battlefield.

[192] The priest of the Pandavas.

[193] Krishna.

[194] Kubera is the lord of riches/treasure. Guhyakas are a semi-divine species who are Kubera's companions.

[195] Parashurama.

[196] Shuka.

[197] Bhishma. The eight Vasus had been born on earth as the sons of Shantanu and Satyavati and Bhishma was the eighth.

[198] Probably directed specially towards Yudhishthira.

[199] A great warrior, greater than a maharatha.

[200] Arjuna.

[201] Kunti was the sister of Vasudeva, Krishna's father.

[202] Bhishma.

[203] Respectively, *dana dharma, raja dharma* and *moksha dharma*.
[204] The movement of the sun to the north of the equator, the period from the winter to the summer solstice. Bhishma waited for uttarayana to die.
[205] And assumes a human form.
[206] Arjuna's.
[207] Arjuna.
[208] Krishna.
[209] Krishna's pledge was that he would not fight. Bhishma's pledge was that he would make Krishna take up weapons.
[210] Krishna.
[211] The whip in one hand and the reins in the other.
[212] Dhritarashtra.
[213] Because of sorrow at the relatives having been killed.
[214] By making Parikshit live.
[215] Yudhishthira.
[216] Vishnu.
[217] The rain god.
[218] Yudhishthira.
[219] Yudhishthira was named Ajatashatru (without enemies).
[220] Subhadra, Arjuna's wife.
[221] Yudhishthira was senior to Krishna in age.
[222] Uttara.
[223] Kripacharya.
[224] Nakula and Sahadeva.
[225] Satyavati.
[226] Sons of Pritha, the Pandavas.
[227] A musical instrument.
[228] Arjuna.
[229] These benedictions were appropriate for one with qualities or attributes, but inappropriate for one without qualities or attributes.
[230] As Narayana.
[231] There was a forest (*vana*) named after a demon called Madhu. This was known as Madhuvana and became Mathura. Madhuvana is thus the area around Mathura.
[232] Lakshmi. Vishnu is Lakshmi's consort.
[233] Dvaraka.
[234] The area around Vrindavana.

[235] Svayamvara is a ceremony where the maiden herself (*svayam*) chooses her husband (*vara*) from assembled suitors. Viryashulka is when the maiden is offered to the suitor who shows the most valour (*virya*), *shulka* meaning price. Chaidya means the king of Chedi, Shishupala, eventually killed by Krishna. Shishupala wished to marry Rukmini. But Krishna abducted Rukmini and married her.

[236] Pradyumna was the son of Rukmini, Samba of Jambavati and Amba of Nagnajiti.

[237] Bhouma means the son of the earth (Bhumi) and refers to Narakasura. Narakasura ruled in Pragjyotishapura and abducted 16,000 (16,100 is a more precise number) maidens. After Krishna killed Narakasura, he married these women.

[238] Krishna's.

[239] Chariots, horses, elephants and foot soldiers.

[240] Krishna.

[241] The area around Dvaraka.

[242] Whenever the sun set.

[243] Of the residents, who were grieving because he had been away.

[244] Implicitly, the hands were also red.

[245] Virinchi is Brahma. Varinchya means Brahma's sons, like Sanaka, Sananda, Sanatana and Sanatkumara.

[246] The area around Mathura.

[247] These are different lines of the Yadavas.

[248] The capital city of the *naga*s.

[249] Serpents. Nagas (also known as uragas) are different from snakes. They are semi-divine, can assume any form at will and reside in specific locations.

[250] *Akshata*, this can mean grain of any kind. But it is specifically used for threshed and winnowed rice that has not been dehusked.

[251] As a mark of welcome.

[252] Krishna's father. Krishna is Vaasudeva.

[253] Krishna's uncle.

[254] Balarama.

[255] Krishna and Jambavati's son.

[256] In this context, gandharvas means singers. The sutas were charioteers, as well as raconteurs of tales. Magadhas were minstrels and bards. So were

bandis. But magadhas seem to have also composed, while bandis sung the compositions of others.

[257] Shvapakas are sometimes equated with *chandala*s. *Shva* means dog and *paka* means to cook. Thus, shvapaka means someone who cooks dogs (eats dogs) or cooks for dogs (lives with dogs).

[258] The word used is *saranga* and this has multiple meanings. It means dappled, but it also means a spotted antelope or a kind of bird. The feet could be compared with these. In interpretations, saranga is usually taken to be a metaphor for devotees.

[259] Vasudeva had several wives. The seven mothers can be interpreted as Devaki's co-wives. But in that event, since Vasudeva had eighteen wives, the number seven does not fit. 'Seven mothers' is interpreted as the biological mother, the preceptor's wife, a brahmana's wife, the king's wife, a cow, the nursemaid and the earth.

[260] The god of love.

[261] Parikshit.

[262] Jambudvipa is one of the seven continents (dvipa) that surround Mount Meru and Bharatavarsha is in Jambudvipa. Jambudvipa is named after *jambu* (*jamun*) trees that grow there.

[263] With Krishna.

[264] Parikshit.

[265] The child Parikshit.

[266] Literally, protected by Vishnu.

[267] Shibi was a generous king. There is a famous story about Indra, in the form of a hawk, pursuing Agni, in the form of a dove, all this being done to test Shibi. Shibi saved the dove by offering his own flesh in return.

[268] Dushyanta's son means Bharata, the son of Dushyanta and Shakuntala. The Bharata lineage is named after him.

[269] Partha Arjuna and Kartavirya Arjuna.

[270] A lion.

[271] Yudhishthira.

[272] The lord of the mountains, Shiva.

[273] Ramaa is Shri. So Rama's refuge is Vishnu.

[274] A king of the Bharata lineage, famous for his generosity and sacrifices.

[275] Kali yuga and its characteristics having set in.

[276] Shringi, the son of Shamika, cursed Parikshit that he would be slain by Takshaka, a serpent.

[277] Shuka.

[278] On the one (Krishna) he had seen in the womb. Test (*pariksha*) is thus another explanation of the name Parikshit, Parikshit testing every man in search of the one he had seen.

[279] The bright lunar fortnight, when the moon waxes.

[280] A kashtha is a small measure of time, equal to 1/30th of a kala. A kala is also a small measure of time. But in the context of the moon, kala is a digit, the entire cycle being made out of sixteen kalas. The reference to the moon is the reason why kashtha has been brought in.

[281] Yudhishthira.

[282] Left there by King Marutta.

[283] Because of the sin.

[284] Krishna.

[285] Krishnaa, Droupadi.

[286] A sage.

[287] Maitreya's name.

[288] Vidura's name.

[289] Sanjaya.

[290] Kripacharya.

[291] Both tirthas and kshetras are sacred places of pilgrimage. However, tirthas are associated with water, while kshetras are not.

[292] The word used is *tata*. It means father, but is applied to anyone who is older or senior.

[293] The Yadus destroyed themselves.

[294] Dhritarashtra, by teaching him.

[295] The sage Mandavya (Animandavya) received excessive punishment from Yama and cursed Yama that he would be born as a shudra. Yama was born as Vidura. Strictly speaking, Vidura was not a shudra. He was the son of a brahmana father and a *vaishya* mother.

[296] Since Yama was absent.

[297] Parikshit.

[298] Ajamidha was an ancestor and Ajamidha is a term applied to both Dhritarashtra and Yudhishthira.

[299] Gandhari.

[300] The text uses the word *maitra*. These are not just morning prayers, but those specifically addressed to Mitra.
[301] Gavalgana was Sanjaya's father.
[302] Dhritarashtra.
[303] Sanjaya.
[304] Dhritarashtra.
[305] Dhritarashtra and Vidura.
[306] A gandharva.
[307] Animals versus humans.
[308] Flora versus fauna.
[309] The one with seven flows.
[310] The *saptarshi*s. The saptarshis are the seven great sages. The list varies, but the standard one is Marichi, Atri, Angira, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu and Vasishtha. In the sky, the saptarshis are identified with the constellation of Ursa Major (Great Bear).
[311] Ganga.
[312] Meaning, thrice a day.
[313] The five senses and the mind.
[314] In the Mahabharata, a forest fire burnt down the cottage.
[315] One whose famous deeds are spoken about.
[316] Yudhishthira.
[317] Bhima.
[318] Narada.
[319] The ones on the left, regarded as inauspicious.
[320] A crow.
[321] The word used is tata. It means son, but is applied to anyone who is junior or younger.
[322] Arjuna.
[323] Shurasena, Kunti's father.
[324] Vasudeva's (Krishna's father) name.
[325] Ugrasena. Ugrasena's younger brother was Devaka.
[326] Hridika's son was Kritavarma. Jayanta, Gada and Sarana were Krishna's brothers.
[327] Sudharma is the name of Indra's assembly hall. Krishna obtained it from Indra and it remained with Krishna as long as he was on earth, returning to heaven thereafter.
[328] Ananta's friend is Balarama.

[329] Satyabhama.

[330] This is a reference to the *parijata* tree, which Satyabhama craved. Krishna seized it from Indra and brought it down to earth.

[331] Arjuna.

[332] Arjuna.

[333] Krishnaa, Droupadi.

[334] All these are incidents described in the Mahabharata.

[335] The architect of the demons.

[336] Bhima.

[337] Jarasandha, who captured the kings for the sacrifice, where they were to be sacrificed.

[338] We have deliberately retained the word pramatha. Pramatha is a tormentor and is used for a ghost or goblin. The lord of the pramathas is normally Shiva. But in this case, it is interpreted as Bhairava. Bhairava is sometimes an expression for Shiva, but not invariably.

[339] Bhima killed Jarasandha.

[340] Krishna's.

[341] A widow unbraids and loosens her hair.

[342] The Pandavas had already eaten and Duryodhana sent Durvasa. There was no food left. Durvasa and his disciples went to have a bath before eating. Krishna arrived and ate the few vegetables left as leftovers. Since Krishna was satisfied, so was everyone in the three worlds and Durvasa and his disciples left after their bath.

[343] Shiva.

[344] Parvati.

[345] Shiva gave Arjuna the *pashupata* weapon.

[346] Dronacharya.

[347] Meaning Prahlada. This is a reference to Vishnu in his narasimha (half-man, half-lion) incarnation.

[348] The king of Trigarta, Susharma.

[349] The king of Sindhu, Jayadratha.

[350] This happened on the day Jayadratha was killed. Arjuna descended from the chariot to find water for the exhausted and thirsty horses.

[351] After the Yadavas fought and Krishna died, Arjuna was escorting the Yadava women to Indraprastha. But with Krishna gone, he lost his powers and was defeated by the cowherds, who abducted the Yadava women.

[352] The Bhagavad Gita.

[353] These shlokas have been interpreted in many different ways.

[354] His physical body and the earth's burden.

[355] The different incarnations.

[356] Parikshit.

[357] Aniruddha's son.

[358] A householder has to maintain three fires, ahavaniya, garhapatya and dakshinatya. When one gives up the householder stage, a prajapatya sacrifice is performed. The three fires are physically extinguished and symbolically imbibed within one's own self.

[359] Prana is the breath of life or the life force. Prana draws breath into the body, apana exhales it. *Vyana* distributes it through the body and *samana* assimilates it. *Udana* gives rise to sound.

[360] Panchatva simply means death, that is, when the body is separated into the five elements. But there is another meaning too. A living being has four states—waking, dreaming, sleeping and *turiya*. Turiya is the fourth state, when one perceives union between the human soul atman and the brahman. Panchatva is the fifth state, beyond turiya.

[361] Sattva, rajas and tamas.

[362] A malevolent being that survives on human flesh.

[363] As Yama.

[364] Prince Uttara was Virata's son and was killed in the Kurukshetra War. The brother Uttara is not to be confused with the sister, Uttaraa. Uttara and Uttaraa were cousin brothers and sisters.

[365] Kripa.

[366] And not kill him.

[367] Dharma has one foot in kali yuga, two in dvapara, three in treta and four in krita.

[368] While this means shudra, it also means outcast.

[369] Indra.

[370] *Kshatra-bandhu*s.

[371] Without following the norms of good behaviour.

[372] Krishna.

[373] Interpreted as crops and grass.

[374] Its products were used in acts of dharma.

[375] Dvija means a person born twice, the second birth referring to the sacred thread ceremony. Although dvija is usually applied to a brahmana, it applies to brahmanas, kshatriyas and vaishyas, but not to shudras.

[376] This is addressed to the bull.
[377] Surabhi is the mother of all cattle and the celestial cow.
[378] This is addressed to the cow.
[379] In the world hereafter.
[380] Everywhere else refers to the consequences of wicked deeds.
[381] Interpreted as those who believe in yoga, with the proposition that one is responsible for happiness and unhappiness.
[382] Interpreted as the *mimamsa* school.
[383] Interpreted as the samkhya school.
[384] As the perpetrator of the act of adharma.
[385] Parikshit.
[386] Gudakesha is one of Arjuna's names.
[387] Yama.
[388] Yudhishthira.
[389] Vishnu/Krishna.
[390] Shuka.
[391] Without destroying the flower.
[392] In kali yuga, even an intention to do a good deed brings success. But a bad deed has to be performed.
[393] Shiva and Brahma respectively.
[394] Garuda.
[395] This is a reference to Ugrashrava having been born as a suta.
[396] Ananta.
[397] In embodied form, interpreted as Lakshmi.
[398] Brahma.
[399] The body and the mind.
[400] The highest state of asceticism and meditation.
[401] Parikshit.
[402] This belonged to the sage Shamika, descended from Angiras.
[403] From attachment.
[404] That is, he was in the turiya stage.
[405] He was not offered a mat of grass or a place on the ground to sit on.
[406] Gift given to a guest.
[407] These were Parikshit's thoughts.
[408] The sage's.
[409] River identified as the Kosi. In fairness, this can also be translated as touching kusha grass.

[410] Shringi.
[411] The Rig Veda, Sama Veda and Yajur Veda.
[412] Shamika is now addressing Krishna.
[413] The opposite sentiments of happiness and unhappiness, pleasure and pain and so on. Virtuous people are not touched by these.
[414] Meaning Krishna, or the brahmana, who is like a god.
[415] Ganga.
[416] The holy basil.
[417] Shiva.
[418] Vishvamitra.
[419] Parashurama.
[420] The Arunas were a special class of rishis who initiated rites.
[421] Since they have to rule, chastise and injure.
[422] The water used to clean the feet.
[423] Of the kingdom.
[424] Ganga.
[425] Of varna or ashrama.
[426] An avadhuta is an ascetic who has renounced all worldly attachments. However, it also has the nuance of someone who has been cast off from society and has been excluded by it.
[427] Literally, his garments were the directions.
[428] Parikshit.
[429] Other than children, he was also surrounded by women.
[430] Kshatra-bandhus.

[431] As in attendants, servants and dependents.
[432] The one without qualities or attributes, the brahman.
[433] Alternatively, as revered as the Vedas.
[434] Of life.
[435] Though it is sometimes used in the sense of an instant, a muhurta is a measure of time equal to forty-eight minutes.
[436] A-U-M or O-U-M, this is the seed of the brahman.
[437] Vishnu's.
[438] Devotion.
[439] Yoga has eight elements—*yama* (restraint), *niyama* (rituals), asana (posture), *pranayama* (breathing), *pratyahara* (withdrawal), dharana (retention), *dhyana* (meditation) and *samadhi* (liberation). That's the reason the expression *ashtanga* (eight-formed) *yoga* is used.
[440] Pranayama.
[441] The form known as Virat.
[442] Interpreted as earth, water, fire, air, space, ahamkara and Mahat.
[443] Literally, pure form of Purusha.
[444] There are seven nether regions—atala, vitala, sutala, rasatala, talatala, mahatala and patala.
[445] Known as *mahitala*.
[446] Known as *nabhastala*.
[447] There are actually fourteen worlds (*loka*s), seven above and seven below. The seven above are—*bhurloka, kharloka, svarloka,* maharloka, janarloka, taparloka and satyaloka *(brahmaloka)*.
[448] The two Ashvins.
[449] Brahma.
[450] Metres, as in metres used in the Vedas.
[451] The *brahmarandhra*.
[452] Sattva, rajas and tamas.
[453] The unmanifest one (*avyakta*) is interpreted as Pradhana.
[454] All semi-divine species.
[455] The dark-complexioned ones are shudras.
[456] Brahma.
[457] At the time of the deluge and destruction.
[458] Such as heaven. These shlokas are interpreted in many different ways.
[459] Being naked.
[460] With their fruits.

[461] So that they can no longer supply water.

[462] So that they do not offer shelter.

[463] The river Vaitarani flows in the nether regions and must be crossed before entering Yama's world.

[464] Alternatively, reddish-brown or yellow.

[465] This blossoming lotus is in the heart. The reference is possibly to the *anahata chakra*, the fourth chakra that is in the heart. It is in the form of a lotus with twelve petals.

[466] The *shrivatsa* mark.

[467] Kshetra is the field, that is, the body. Kshetrajna is one who knows the body, that is, the soul, both human and universal. The context makes it clear what is meant and this is also true of the word atman.

[468] The jivatman into the paramatman.

[469] The gods.

[470] This sentence has complex interpretations, using Mahat, Prakriti and ahamkara. We have kept it simple, since none of these interpretations is self-evident.

[471] The chakras located in the navel, abdomen, heart, chest, palate and forehead.

[472] From the *manipura chakra* to the anahata chakra.

[473] *Vishuddhi chakra*.

[474] *Ajna chakra*.

[475] Two ears, two eyes, two nostrils and mouth.

[476] Brahmarandhra.

[477] Brahma.

[478] Divine and semi-divine species.

[479] Yoga leads to eight major *siddhis* or powers. These are *anima* (becoming as small as one desires), *mahima* (as large as one desires), *laghima* (as light as one wants), *garima* (as heavy as one wants), *prapti* (obtaining what one wants), *prakamya* (travelling where one wants), *vashitvam* (powers to control creatures) and *ishitvam* (obtaining divine powers).

[480] Sattva, rajas and tamas.

[481] The sacred fire that pervades the universe.

[482] Sushumna is the central artery in the body. Those who pass through this reach the brahman. Those who pass through the passage known as *pingala* (on the right) reach the gods. Those who pass through the passage known as *ida* (on the left) reach the ancestors.

[483] The serpent, Ananta or Shesha.
[484] Brahmaloka or satyaloka.
[485] One parardha is fifty years of Brahma's life. So two parardhas is 100 years of Brahma's life. Thus, this is more than 300 trillion human years.
[486] Satyaloka.
[487] The divinities who rule over the senses.
[488] The jivatman in the paramatman.
[489] The three Vedas.
[490] Meaning Vasudeva.
[491] Interpreted as Durga.
[492] The fire god.
[493] The twelve Adityas.
[494] Interpreted as the earth.
[495] Interpreted as Vishnu.
[496] Interpreted as Varuna.
[497] Shiva.
[498] The one who is spoken about in excellent shlokas, Vishnu.
[499] Or Nairitti, a demoness.
[500] *Kaivalya*.
[501] Of the sun.
[502] Of blacksmiths.
[503] On a peacock's feathers.
[504] Dharma, artha and kama.
[505] Of ignorance.
[506] The gods.
[507] Shuka.
[508] Sattva, rajas and tamas.
[509] The three Vedas.
[510] Brahma, the one without birth.
[511] According to their capacity.
[512] For the sake of creation, Sarasvati standing for speech, manifested from Brahma's mouth.
[513] The five elements.
[514] The five organs of sense, the five objects of the senses, the five elements and the mind.
[515] Vedavyasa.
[516] That is, Narada asked Brahma. Hari taught Brahma.

[517] Covering not just preservation, but creation and destruction too.

[518] The maya.

[519] Meaning heavenly worlds.

[520] Sattva, rajas and tamas.

[521] The imbalance in sattva, rajas and tamas led to the creation of Mahat. This can also be translated as action leading to Mahat's birth.

[522] The same as *sattvika*.

[523] The same as *rajasika*.

[524] Associated with space.

[525] Fire's attribute is form. However, the earlier attributes of touch and sound were also assumed.

[526] Referred to as *vishesha*.

[527] The directions mean the five organs of sense—Vayu presides over the skin, Surya over the eyes, Varuna (referred to in the text as Prachetas) over the tongue, and the two Ashvins over the nose and the ears. The other five preside over organs of action—Agni (referred to in the text as Vahni) over the organ of speech, Indra over the hands, Upendra (Vishnu) over the legs, Mitra over the anus and Prajapati (Brahma, referred to in the text as Ka) over the genital organs.

[528] Ears, skin, nose, eye and tongue.

[529] Organ of speech, hands, feet, anus and genital organ.

[530] Brahmanda.

[531] The earth and the region around the earth.

[532] Since tapoloka is higher than janaloka, this is also interpreted as the area between the lips.

[533] Therefore, it is not created and need not be identified on the body.

[534] The seven constituents (*dhatu*) of the body are *rasa* (plasma), *rakta* (blood), *mamsa* (flesh), *meda* (fat), *asthi* (bones), *majja* (nerve or marrow) and *shukra* (semen, reproductive tissue). Chhanda is a metre and the seven used in the Vedas are Gayatri, Ushnik, Anushtubh, Brihati, Pankti, Trishtubh and Jagati.

[535] Havya is offerings to the gods and kavya is offerings to the ancestors.

[536] Sanaka, Sananda, Sanatana and Sanatkumara.

[537] Shiva.

[538] Such as the saptarshis.

[539] Rakshasas.

[540] Literally, based on the foot.

[541] This is subject to various interpretations. In addition to foot, pada also means quarter. One quarter, or one foot, is for the three worlds of bhurloka, bhuvarloka and svarloka. The other three quarters, or feet, are for the worlds above, such as janaloka, tapoloka and satyaloka. The three heads support these and these are above maharloka, which is at the top.

[542] Bhurloka, bhuvarloka and svarloka.

[543] Brahmacharya, *vanaprastha* and sannyasa do not lead to offspring.

[544] That is, meditate.

[545] There are four types of officiating priests—*hotar* (one who recites from the Rig Veda), *udgatar* (one who recites from the Sama Veda), *adhvaryu* (one who recites from the Yajur Veda) and *brahman* (one who recites from the Atharva Veda). This brahman is not to be confused with the supreme soul (brahman or paramatman).

[546] Of gods.

[547] Gifts given to brahmanas after the sacrifice.

[548] Procedures for the sacrifice.

[549] The formal announcement of the intention to undertake the sacrifice.

[550] For possible transgressions.

[551] The number and names of Prajapatis varies. The number is sometimes given as ten and Brahma is excluding himself, leaving nine. The Prajapatis were born through Brahma's mental powers.

[552] Shiva.

[553] Creation, preservation and destruction.

[554] Shiva.

[555] Interpreted as the gross body.

[556] Interpreted as the gross elements.

[557] Shiva.

[558] Vishnu.

[559] Prajapatis.

[560] Ghosts.

[561] A specific type of evil spirit.

[562] Avataras assumed as part of his pastimes.

[563] The boar (varaha) incarnation.

[564] This was Hiranyaksha, who dragged the earth down into the ocean.

[565] Suyama's wife.

[566] Hari means the remover. Svayambhu Manu was his maternal grandfather.

[567] The path of samkhya.

[568] Meaning someone who has been given. This was Datta or Dattatreya.

[569] Sanaka, Sananda, Sanatana and Sanatkumara.

[570] Ananga (Kama), the god of love, sent apsaras to tempt Nara and Narayana. But these apsaras saw more beautiful apsaras emerge from the bodies of Nara and Narayana.

[571] He is above Nara and Narayana, though they are his forms.

[572] This is Dhruva, the son of King Uttanapada. He was abused by his stepmother. He became the Pole Star, with saptarshis (the constellation Ursa Major) around him.

[573] This is Prithu, born as Vena's son. The earth (*prithvi* or *prithivi*) is named after Prithu.

[574] Also referred to as Hayagriva, the one with the head or neck of a horse.

[575] Interpreted as the Vedas.

[576] Vaivasvata Manu.

[577] The fish incarnation.

[578] Alternatively, Narasimha.

[579] An elephant.

[580] Garuda.

[581] The Adityas.

[582] This is a reference to the dwarf (vamana) incarnation.

[583] The science of life, healing and medicine.

[584] As Parashurama. Parashurama exterminated kshatriyas from the world twenty-one times.

[585] Dasharatha's.

[586] Dashagriva, Ravana.

[587] Sita.

[588] A makara is a mythical aquatic creature, but can loosely be translated as shark or crocodile. There is a minor tense issue in this shloka, where the future tense is used, the dialogue between Brahma and Narada having occurred prior to the Ramayana incidents. However, we have stuck to the past tense of the other shlokas.

[589] Indra's mount is Airavata, the elephant, loaned to Rama when he fought against Ravana. The broken tusks were stuck in Ravana's chest and illuminated the directions.

[590] Two strands of hair, white and black, resulted in the two births on earth, as Balarama and Krishna respectively.
[591] Putana.
[592] Kaliya.
[593] Balarama.
[594] Yashoda.
[595] About his greatness.
[596] Maya's son was Vyomasura.
[597] Indra. They did not perform the sacrifice dedicated to Indra.
[598] Govardhana.
[599] Dhanada's (Kubera) follower was Shankhachuda, who wanted to abduct one of those women.
[600] Meaning Dhenukasura.
[601] Chanura and Mushtika.
[602] Kuvalayapida.
[603] Kalayavana.
[604] Dvivida.
[605] Born from the earth, hence, Narakasura.
[606] Vedavyasa.
[607] Though this is by no means obvious, this is interpreted as a reference to Buddha.
[608] From the first three varnas.
[609] This is a reference to the Trivikrama form, where one foot was placed on Satyaloka, above the three worlds and a place where there is equilibrium between the three qualities of sattva, rajas and tamas.
[610] That is, the physical bodies.
[611] In the plural, so Narada and Sanaka, Sananda, Sanatana and Sanatkumara. We will not always explain the other names through notes, except in instances where something needs to be clarified. The accounts will figure later in the Bhagavata Purana text.
[612] Prahlada.
[613] Svayambhu Manu and his wife, Shatarupa.
[614] Ila's son, Pururava.
[615] King Janaka.
[616] Yayati was Nahusha's son.
[617] Bhishma.
[618] Shuka.

[619] The atman.
[620] When you recite it to others.
[621] That is, the heart.
[622] Autumn rains wash away muddy water.
[623] A traveller who has returned to his own home after travelling.
[624] The atman is not made out of the five elements, but the physical body is. A cause is something like karma, without a cause is something beyond karma.
[625] As a human one.
[626] Brahma.
[627] Parikshit is asking for clarity on this.
[628] A kalpa is the longer cycle of creation and destruction. Within that, there are subsidiary/secondary cycles of creation and destruction (vikalpa), the duration of a Manu's rule.
[629] Birth as someone who possesses qualities. Undesired means inferior birth.
[630] Guilds.
[631] Emergencies, known as *apad dharma*. In such situations, deviation from normal dharma is permitted.
[632] Elements used in creation.
[633] Spiritual.
[634] Linga means *linga sharira*, the subtle body. How is it detached from the physical body?
[635] *Upaveda*s are texts like *Ayurveda, Dhanurveda, Gandharva-veda*. Texts of dharma mean the *Dharmashastra*s.
[636] Dharma, artha and kama.
[637] Shuka.
[638] Alternatively, as revered as the Vedas.
[639] When Brahma was born.
[640] With the physical body.
[641] I and mine.
[642] Brahma.
[643] Not exactly, but roughly, akshara is a syllable.
[644] The sixteenth is *ta*, the twenty-first is *pa*, counting the consonants and not the vowels. Combined, they become *tapa*, austerities.
[645] The sense organs and the objects of the senses.
[646] Vaikuntha.

[647] Of Hari's attendants and devotees.

[648] Celestial vehicles.

[649] Literally, shrivatsa means the place where Shri resides. It is a twirl of curly hair on Vishnu's/Krishna's chest.

[650] The four are Prakriti, Purusha, Mahat and Ahamkara. The sixteen are the five organs of perception (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin), the five organs of action (hands, legs, stomach, genital organs, organ of excretion), five elements and the mind. The five are the *tanmatra*s (subtle elements). These twenty-five are his tattvas.

[651] Yoga leads to eight siddhis or powers. These are anima (becoming as small as one desires), mahima (as large as one desires), laghima (as light as one wants), garima (as heavy as one wants), prapti (obtaining what one wants), prakamya (travelling where one wants), vashitvam (powers to control creatures) and ishitvam (obtaining divine powers). These are minor and temporary powers. His personal powers are his knowledge, power, strength, prosperity, valour and energy.

[652] Brahma's.

[653] The lord.

[654] Tapa (tapas).

[655] Before creation.

[656] After creating the universe.

[657] This can be taken to mean either the elements, or the created beings.

[658] Brahma created so that it was just as it was in the previous kalpa.

[659] In the Bhagavata Purana. These are thus the ten characteristics of the Bhagavata Purana. The text doesn't have a numbering though. The ten are listed, sarga, visarga, sthana, poshana, uti, manvantara, isha-anukatha, nirodha, mukti and ashraya.

[660] As the brahman.

[661] This shloka has many complicated interpretations.

[662] This water is known as *garbhodaka*, the water that was the womb.

[663] Virat Purusha, in the form of Brahma.

[664] Purusha is Nara (man) and since water was created from Nara, it is Naara. *Ayana* is resting place. Since his resting place was water (Naara), he is Naaraayana (Narayana).

[665] As a separate organ of the body.

[666] The skin.

[667] Through offspring.

[668] The genital organs and the presiding deity, Prajapati.
[669] The presiding deity.
[670] Apana and Mrityu.
[671] These are the presiding deities.
[672] The presiding deity.
[673] The other seven are made out of water, fire, air, space, Mahat, ahamkara and Prakriti.
[674] These are different categories of beings, some semi-divine. Some are benevolent, others are malevolent.
[675] Mobile and immobile.
[676] Born from wombs, eggs, sweat (insects) and trees and herbs.
[677] Sattva dominated by sattva, sattva dominated by rajas, sattva dominated by tamas and so on.
[678] And preservation and destruction.
[679] The present kalpa is known as Shveta Varaha Kalpa.
[680] Vidura.
[681] Maitreya.

[682] Maitreya was the son of Kusharava and Mitra. Therefore, he is referred to as both Kousharava and Maitreya. He was Parashara's disciple.
[683] Krishna. This refers to Krishna's role as an ambassador soliciting peace, at King Duryodhana's court. Rebuffed, he stayed in Vidura's house, not in Duryodhana's palace.
[684] Shuka.
[685] Yudhishthira.
[686] Dhritarashtra.
[687] Probably Dhritarashtra, but could mean Duryodhana too.
[688] Vidura.
[689] Often known as Vidura *niti*.
[690] This is what Vidura said.
[691] The brahmanas and the kshatriyas.
[692] Krishna.
[693] Duryodhana.
[694] Duhshasana.
[695] Shakuni.
[696] These are Duryodhana's words.
[697] The words, which were like arrows.
[698] Krishna.
[699] Yudhishthira.
[700] The emperor's umbrella.
[701] Dhritarashtra, Gandhari and Kunti, who were burnt down in the forest.
[702] And the friction results in a fire.
[703] Cows.
[704] Earlier, Uddhava had been Brihaspati's disciple.
[705] Krishna and Balarama.
[706] Brahma.
[707] Shurasena's.
[708] Meaning Vasudeva, Krishna's father. Kunti was Vasudeva's sister.
[709] Ugrasena.
[710] Krishna. Kamsa had ousted Ugrasena.
[711] Kartikeya.
[712] Satyaki. Satyaki was Arjuna's student.
[713] Akrura.
[714] Meaning Devaki.
[715] Rig, Sama and Yajur Veda.

[716] Meaning the Vedas.
[717] This requires interpretation. The four aspects are Vasudeva, Samkarshana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, respectively presiding over consciousness, ego, intelligence and the mind.
[718] Satyabhama's son.
[719] Krishna.
[720] Yudhishthira.
[721] Arjuna.
[722] Garuda/Suparna snatched amrita from Indra.
[723] Pandu.
[724] Dhritarashtra and Pandu respectively.
[725] Caused by false sense of learning, wealth and noble birth.
[726] Uddhava.
[727] As a child, Uddhava preferred serving Krishna to having breakfast.
[728] For Krishna.
[729] *Ajagara*. Alternatively, python, a metaphor for time.
[730] Before the churning of the ocean, the moon used to be in the ocean.
[731] Yudhishthira.
[732] The text uses the word *vidhatri*, meaning creator.
[733] Alternatively, cause and effect, or this world and the next.
[734] The metaphor of fire being hidden in the wood, until it is ignited through friction.
[735] The city means Mathura.
[736] Chedi means Shishupala. Killed by Krishna, he was liberated at the royal sacrifice.
[737] Sattva, rajas and tamas.
[738] Putana, in the form of a crane.
[739] After being killed by Krishna.
[740] *Sudarshana chakra*.
[741] Garuda.
[742] Kamsa.
[743] Brahma.
[744] Balarama.
[745] To kill Krishna.
[746] Kaliya, who inhabited the Yamuna and poisoned the water.
[747] From the water.

[748] The gopas were cowherds and their king was Nanda. This sacrifice was performed instead of Indra's sacrifice.

[749] A demon named Panchajana had swallowed Sandipani's son. Krishna brought him back to life.

[750] Bhishmaka's daughter was Rukmini, an incarnation of Lakshmi. Thus, Rukmini was Krishna's share.

[751] Meaning the gandharva form of marriage, one of the eight different forms of marriage. King Bhishmaka had expected it to be svayamvara, where the prospective bride chooses her groom from amidst assembled suitors.

[752] Just as Garuda took away his share of amrita.

[753] Usually known as Satyabhama.

[754] The Parijata tree, desired by Satyabhama.

[755] Shachi, Indra's wife, urged him to bring the tree back.

[756] The earth's son was Narakasura, killed with the use of the sudarshana chakra.

[757] Naraka's son.

[758] Naraka's name.

[759] As a husband.

[760] Kalayavana.

[761] The king of Magadha, Jarasandha.

[762] Mathura.

[763] Krishna did not kill them himself, but got them killed through Muchukunda and Bhima.

[764] He killed Shambara, Mura and Dantavakra himself. Dvivida and Balvala were killed by Balarama. Bana was defeated by Krishna, but was allowed to live.

[765] On the sides of the sons of Dhritarashtra and of Pandu.

[766] These are Krishna's thoughts.

[767] Dharma's son, Yudhishthira.

[768] Permitted by the brahmanas, the Yadavas drank the liquor.

[769] Maireya is liquor made from molasses or grain.

[770] Maitreya.

[771] Krishna.

[772] Uddhava was a Vasu in a former life.

[773] The Prajapatis.

[774] Brahma.

[775] Dharma, artha, kama and moksha.
[776] In the householder stage of *garhasthya*.
[777] Brahma.
[778] Uddhava. Uddhava's father is usually referred to as Devabhaga. It is possible that Aupavaga is being used as an adjective, derived from *upagu*, meaning, something or someone near a cow.
[779] The three worlds.
[780] Vidura.
[781] Uddhava.
[782] Another name for the Yamuna.
[783] Ganga.
[784] Maitreya.
[785] The heavenly river is Ganga and the spot is therefore identified as Haridvara.
[786] The three worlds.
[787] Krishna's account.
[788] Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa.
[789] Yama had inflicted an excessively harsh punishment on the sage and had been cursed by Mandavya.
[790] Vichitravirya had a servant-maid and Vidura was the son of Vedavyasa and this servant-maid.
[791] The universe had not been created.
[792] This is interpreted in many different ways. Purusha is manifested from Vishnu and impregnates maya, or Purusha impregnates Prakriti.
[793] Purusha.
[794] Interpreted as ahamkara. Alternatively, Mahat tattva led to ahamkara.
[795] Who preside over the senses.
[796] Tanmatras.
[797] Air possesses its own attributes, as well as that of space and so on.
[798] Relating to adhidaivika (destiny), adhibhoutika (nature) and adhyatmika (one's own nature).
[799] Ganga.
[800] Sattva, rajas and tamas.
[801] Vishnu and Lakshmi entered Kala (time), or entered Prakriti (being referred to as Kala).
[802] Mahat, ahamkara, five gross elements, five subtle elements, five organs of senses, five organs of action and mind.

[803] Ten means the ten vital airs (prana)—prana, apana, vyana, udana, samana, naga, kurma, *krikala*, *devadatta* and *dhananjaya*. The three are adhibhuta, adhidaiva and adhyatma.

[804] Virat Purusha.

[805] Vishnu was inside Virat Purusha. The divinities had entreated Vishnu earlier.

[806] Virat Purusha's.

[807] Virat Purusha's.

[808] Vayu.

[809] Two different kinds of skin are mentioned. The earlier skin was *charman*, the outside skin. This skin is *tvach*, which means either the inside skin, or both the outside and inside skin taken together.

[810] Prajapati.

[811] Brahma.

[812] Abhimana is pride/haughtiness, the false sense of ego. The lord is Rudra.

[813] Depending on their combinations of gunas (sattva, rajas and tamas), gods, humans and inferior beings occupy these worlds.

[814] Humans remained on earth and have transactions with the gods in the form of performing sacrifices to them.

[815] Tamas.

[816] The heavenly planets and earth.

[817] Interpreted as the Vedas.

[818] That is, miscreants.

[819] Brahma.

[820] Meaning Rudra.

[821] Someone asks the child to play, or the child comes across an object it can play with.

[822] The illustrious one.

[823] In a dream.

[824] This has been interpreted in different ways—the independence of the illustrious one and the dependence of living creatures on him; listening to his account and serving him; Hari and attachment to material objects; and knowledge and devotion.

[825] In maya, but inside Hari.

[826] Vishnu killed a demon named Madhu.

[827] Of the devotees.

[828] Virat.

[829] Organs of sense, objects of the senses and organs of action.

[830] Each avatara had a different composition of gunas.

[831] Literally, abstention from acts, interpreted as non-attachment to the fruits of the acts.

[832] Pratiloma means against the natural order and applies to progeny where the mother is superior in varna to the father. *Anuloma* applies to progeny where the father is superior in varna to the mother.

[833] Student.

[834] Kings born in the Puru lineage.

[835] Sanatkumara.

[836] Ganga.

[837] Balarama (Samkarshana) is identified with the serpent Ananta-Shesha.

[838] Detachment from fruits and renunciation of action.

[839] A sage in the Vasishtha lineage.

[840] Parashara wished to destroy the rakshasas. In an attempt to save his progeny, Pulastya dissuaded him. When Parashara complied, Pulasyta blessed him that he would recite the Puranas. There are different accounts of how the Bhagavata Purana was disseminated over time and they don't always agree.

[841] He was sleeping on Ananta-Shesha.

[842] The four yugas make up a mahayuga and he slept for one thousand mahayugas.

[843] Brahma.

[844] Inside the lotus.

[845] One hundred years.

[846] Vishnu was attired in a yellow garment.

[847] The image of Vishnu continues, but is not stated explicitly. The golden peaks are compared to his diadem and the garland of trees to the garland of flowers he wears. Vishnu's arms and feet are compared to those of the mountain, Vishnu being superior in beauty.

[848] Brahma.

[849] The darkness of ignorance.

[850] Atheists and heretics.

[851] *Vata, pitta* and *kapha*. These can be loosely translated as wind, bile and phlegm. In ayurveda, these are the three *dosha*s or humours in the body and they are always striving against each other.

[852] This part uses the third person.
[853] Brahma, Shiva and Vishnu.
[854] Of time.
[855] There are various listings of the five, such as—anger, confusion, hatred, lack of perseverance and vanity.
[856] Before the destruction.
[857] Lakshmi.
[858] So that I am not attached to the fruits of the action.
[859] As the power to know, the presiding deity of speech, intelligence and the Vedas.
[860] Brahma.
[861] One in whom the Vedas are vested, Brahma.
[862] Vidura's.
[863] Brahma.
[864] This can also be translated as the calyx.
[865] Three means above the earth, the earth and under the earth. Fourteen means the fourteen lokas mentioned earlier.
[866] Brahma's world.
[867] Time.
[868] This gets into interpretation. Creation due to Prakriti is interpreted as creation that takes place outside the cosmic egg, while creation due to vikriti is interpreted as creation that takes place inside the cosmic egg.
[869] The three kinds of destruction are regular ones caused by time (known as *nitya*), that resulting from a fire in Ananta's mouth (known as *naimittika*) and that resulting from interaction between the gunas (known as *prakritika*).
[870] Meaning Brahma.
[871] *Osadhi*, more accurately, trees and herbs that die after yielding fruit.
[872] Like bamboo.
[873] The first kind of creeper is *lata*, which requires support to grow. This kind of creeper is *virudha*, not requiring support from another tree/plant to grow.
[874] The first kind of tree is *vanaspati*, which has fruits, but without visible flowers. This kind of tree is *druma*, which has fruits and visible flowers.
[875] Kind of ox.
[876] These are cloven-hooved.
[877] Uncloven-hooved.
[878] Kind of buffalo.

[879] Sharabha has many meanings—young elephant, camel. It is also a mythical animal with eight legs, believed to be stronger than a lion. In this context, one probably means the mythical animal.

[880] Mythical aquatic creature, can loosely be translated as crocodile.

[881] A different kind of vulture.

[882] A different kind of crane.

[883] A different kind of owl.

[884] Sanaka, Sananda, Sanatana and Sanatkumara.

[885] Resulting from both Prakriti and vikriti.

[886] Learned ones, gods.

[887] This is a total of nine. Therefore, siddhas probably is an adjective and means that any of the other categories can become a Siddha.

[888] If one counts the earlier list as nine, one does have ten categories.

[889] With other paramanus or atoms.

[890] There are many difficulties in translating and interpreting this shloka. The meaning is not immediately obvious.

[891] A pala is a measure of weight, but its stated weight varies across sources. 30 grams is a rough indication. Angula is the length of a finger. Masha is just short of one gram.

[892] Season. There are six seasons—*vasanta* (spring), *grishma* (summer), *varsha* (monsoon), *sharad* (autumn), *hemanta* (just before winter) and *shishira* (winter).

[893] Uttarayana is the movement of the sun to the north of the equator, the period from the winter to the summer solstice. *Dakshinayana* is the movement of the sun to the south of the equator, the period from the summer to the winter solstice.

[894] Uttarayana is day and dakshinayana is night.

[895] Samvatsara is the solar year, anuvatsara is the lunar year, parivatsara seems to have been calculated on the basis of Jupiter's orbit and vatsara was calculated on the basis of the nakshatras. Since idavatsara occurred once every five years, it probably had an intercalary month.

[896] Meaning the sun god.

[897] One hundred years, according to their respective measurements of time.

[898] Those who are beyond the three worlds.

[899] Measured as years of the gods, krita yuga is four thousand years, treta yuga is three thousand years, dvapara yuga is two thousand years and kali

yuga is one thousand years. This cycle is known as a mahayuga, but a mahayuga is more than ten thousand years. Each yuga has a *sandhi* at the beginning and an *amsha* at the end of the yuga. This is 400 years for krita yuga, 300 years for treta yuga, 200 years for dvapara yuga and 100 years for kali yuga. Hence, two thousand years are added to get twelve thousand years.

[900] There were three feet in treta, two in dvapara and one in kali.

[901] That is, mahayugas.

[902] One of Brahma's days.

[903] One thousand divided by fourteen is 71.43.

[904] These, including the lord of the gods (Indra) vary from one manvantara (the period of a Manu) to another.

[905] Depending on the measure of time in the place one resides in. Alternatively, this may specifically refer to Brahma.

[906] Brahma's.

[907] The present parardha.

[908] For Hari.

[909] Time.

[910] *Yojana*s, though yojanas is not explicitly stated.

[911] Covering the universe.

[912] To Hari, the universe is like a paramanu.

[913] Brahma's.

[914] Respectively, the darkness that makes one blind, darkness, great confusion and confusion. These have different nuances of interpretation in samkhya.

[915] Nilalohita, *nila* (blue) and *lohita* (red).

[916] *Rud* means to cry or weep.

[917] That is, these are your names.

[918] Brahma. They were born through Brahma's mental powers.

[919] Or Angira.

[920] Meaning some other Brahma.

[921] That is, Brahma.

[922] Interpreted as collections of mantras.

[923] The same as *agnishtoma*.

[924] The names of different kinds of sacrifices.

[925] These are the four kinds of conduct for brahmacharya. Savitra means that one is celibate for three nights, beginning with the sacred thread cere-

mony, reciting the *savitri mantra*. Prajapatya means the observance of celibacy for one year. Brahma means the observance of celibacy until the Vedas have been mastered. Brihat means the observance of celibacy throughout one's life.

[926] These are the four kinds of conduct for garhasthya. Varta means subsistence on the basis of permitted occupations. Sanchaya means subsistence on the basis of what has been stored, such as through earnings by performing sacrifices. Shalina means subsistence on the basis of whatever can be obtained without resorting to asking for alms. Shila-unccha means subsistence on the basis of collecting grains from the ground.

[927] These are the four kinds of conduct for vanaprastha. Vaikhanasas are those who subsist on wild grain, obtained without resorting to agriculture; valakhilyas are those who subsist on fresh fruit; audumburas eat fruit gathered from whatever direction they first happen to look at in the morning; phenapas live on fruits and leaves that naturally drop down from trees.

[928] These are the four kinds of conduct for those who are in sannyasa. Kutichakas follow the norms prescribed for the sannyasa stage. Bahvodas also follow these norms, but focus on knowledge, as do hamsas. A bahvoda carries three staffs and can stay at a place for three nights. A hamsa carries a single staff and can stay at a place for one night. There are such variations between the two, but they vary across texts. A nishkriya (also known as paramahamsa) is someone who has realized the brahman and has given up all action.

[929] Dharma, artha and kama.

[930] Vyahriti means the words *bhuh, bhuvah* and *svah*, uttered after Oum.

[931] The sound of Oum.

[932] The consonants, *ka* to *ma*, are Brahma's sense organs.

[933] *Sha* to *ha*.

[934] This is probably a reference to Brahma having given up his body in shame.

[935] Devahuti.

[936] The father is Svayambhuva (Brahma) and the son is Svaayambhuva Manu.

[937] Vishnu. This is interpreted as Krishna often resting his feet on Vidura's lap.

[938] The boar.

[939] Sanaka, Sananda, Sanatana and Sanatkumara.

[940] The three Vedas.

[941] More accurately, his three joints were the rites of sacrifices.

[942] Before creation.

[943] The text uses the word rasa and we have translated this simply as water. Rasa, in these shlokas, is often translated and interpreted as rasatala. In other words, the earth was not just in the waters, but in the specific nether region known as rasatala.

[944] This daitya was Hiranyaksha.

[945] The Sudarshana chakra.

[946] Red chalk from the earth.

[947] The three Vedas.

[948] The earth.

[949] Referred to as Yajna Varaha.

[950] Vessel used to offer a share to Brahma.

[951] Cup for holding *soma*.

[952] There are three *ishti*s or upasads associated with a sacrifice—*diksha* (the initiation into the sacrifice), prayaniya (the initial rites of the sacrifice) and *upaniya* (the concluding rites of the sacrifice).

[953] Pravargya is the rite performed before a soma sacrifice. Before each of the upasads, pravargya is performed. Sabhya sacrifices are performed without a fire and avasathya ones with a fire.

[954] Agnishtoma, *atyagnishtoma,* ukthya, shodashi, vajapeya, atiratra and *aptoryama*.

[955] The Vedas.

[956] A kulachala is a great mountain, but any great mountain is not a kulachala. Each of the seven regions has a kulachala and their names are Mahendra, Malaya, Sahya, Shuktiman, Riksha, Vindhya and Pariyatra.

[957] In the form of the boar incarnation.

[958] Dhruva.

[959] Narada.

[960] The ocean of life.

[961] Rudra or Shiva.

[962] Shiva.

[963] Probably implying that there is no secrecy.

[964] Interpreted as Shiva having rejected material objects and maya, though these are enjoyed by others.

[965] Kama, the god of love.

[966] Sati, Shiva's wife, was also Daksha's daughter and Diti's sister.
[967] The vajra.
[968] Sudarshana chakra.
[969] Vishnu.
[970] The moon.
[971] Indra and the other gods might harm her sons.
[972] The power of the foetus.
[973] The guna of rajas.
[974] Interpreted as the Vedas.
[975] They have Vishnu's form, with four arms.
[976] Meaning something that leads to ultimate bliss.
[977] Kind of creeper.
[978] Mandara is the Indian coral tree, kunda is a kind of jasmine, kuraba is the *Barleria Caerulea*, utpala is a water lily or the blue lotus, champaka is the sampangi flower, arna is the teak tree, punnaga is the nutmeg tree or a white lotus, naga (*nagakesara*) is the Indian rose chestnut, bakula is a tree with fragrant blossoms, ambuja is a lotus and parijata is the night-flowering coral jasmine. The text says *kurava*, we have corrected it to kuraba.
[979] Tulasi.
[980] Other than Krishna's deeds.
[981] Of ignorance.
[982] Vaikuntha is above the worlds of the gods.
[983] Sanatkumara and his brothers.
[984] The sages were beyond mundane concerns and distinctions.
[985] Such as inside a pot.
[986] But aren't really gods.
[987] The universe is in Hari's stomach.
[988] Lust, anger and avarice.
[989] The same as Padmanabha, the one who had a lotus in his navel.
[990] Garuda.
[991] Sanatkumara and his brothers.
[992] The brahman.
[993] Brahma.
[994] Such as material objects.
[995] Literally, a svapacha is someone who eats dogs or cooks for dogs. In most instances, it is used as a synonym for a chandala.
[996] Of brahmanas.

[997] Shiva.

[998] Yama.

[999] Instead of noble rishis, translations usually say that Vishnu's words were like mantras composed by rishis, that is, Vedic hymns. This seems to be forced and unnecessary.

[1000] One who has avataras in the first three yugas.

[1001] Lakshmi.

[1002] Auspicious planets like Mercury, Jupiter and Venus were surpassed by inauspicious ones like Mars and Saturn.

[1003] Kashyapa.

[1004] If there were twins, contrary to current practice, the one born first was regarded as younger and the one born later (who remained longer in the womb) was regarded as elder.

[1005] Hiranyaksha.

[1006] The gods.

[1007] A necklace or garland indicating victory, usually made out of eight kinds of pearls. This is also the name of Vishnu's necklace.

[1008] Though Garuda has earlier been described as Tarkshya's son, Tarkshya is also a name for Garuda.

[1009] Prachetas is Varuna and Varuna's capital city is named Vibhavari.

[1010] In his boar incarnation.

[1011] The boar's.

[1012] Vanagochara means an animal that dwells in the forest, as well as one that lives in the water. Therefore, it can be taken to mean an animal that is amphibious.

[1013] The earth.

[1014] The one with the golden hair, another name for Hiranyaksha.

[1015] Brahma.

[1016] Hiranyaksha.

[1017] The same as Hiranyaksha.

[1018] Brahma.

[1019] Brahma.

[1020] Cattle.

[1021] Abhijit is usually taken to be one muhurta, not two. There are thirty muhurtas in a span of twenty-four hours, fifteen during the day and fifteen during the night. Some muhurtas are auspicious, others are not and Abhijit muhurta is the most auspicious of the fifteen muhurtas during the day. Liter-

ally, Abhijit is a muhurta that brings victory. Today, Abhijit muhurta, depending on the place, will be around noon.

[1022] As a boar.

[1023] They were ignorant because they didn't know about Vishnu's powers.

[1024] The text uses the word Hari, which means Indra too. But because two uses of the word Hari might cause confusion, we have rendered this as Indra. The reference is to an incident where Tarkshya/Garuda carried away amrita and was struck by Indra's vajra. Though Garuda wasn't hurt, out of respect for the vajra, he dropped one of his feathers.

[1025] Hiranyaksha.

[1026] The three rites of a sacrifice, diksha (the initiation into the sacrifice), prayaniya (the initial rites of the sacrifice) and upaniya (the concluding rites of the sacrifice) being used as a metaphor.

[1027] The lord of the Maruts is Indra and Tvashta's son is Vritra.

[1028] Vishnu's.

[1029] Brahma.

[1030] Shounaka.

[1031] Of liberation.

[1032] Kushavarta is identified with Haridvara.

[1033] Brahma.

[1034] The preceding sentence means independent of their wives. This sentence means all the Prajapatis acting together.

[1035] This shloka is capable of being interpreted in many different kinds of ways and so are the ones that immediately follow.

[1036] Vaikarika, taijasa and tamasa.

[1037] Five gross elements, five organs of perception, five organs of action and so on.

[1038] Enter Brahma.

[1039] From night.

[1040] Asuras.

[1041] Meaning Vidura.

[1042] She was actually evening.

[1043] Brahma.

[1044] The gandharvas.

[1045] Every living being has four bodies—*tandra* (lassitude), *jrimbhana* (yawning), *nidra* (sleep) and unmada (madness).

[1046] Bhutas and pishachas.

[1047] Meaning disappearance.

[1048] Thanks to humans being created.

[1049] Hrishikesha means controller of the senses and is a word normally applied to Vishnu/Krishna. But here, it is being used for Brahma and Brahma is also referred to as a rishi.

[1050] The word dvipa not only means island, but also a continent or region of the earth. The earth was believed to be divided into seven continents.

[1051] Respectively, Akuti and Prasuti.

[1052] The word used is kriya yoga, which can be interpreted in diverse ways.

[1053] A complete form with attributes described in the Vedas.

[1054] Kardama.

[1055] Be as useful as a cow is to a householder.

[1056] The months and the days, with an intercalary month included.

[1057] The rims are the seasons, the leaves being various units of time. The naves are units of four months each.

[1058] This is Maitreya speaking, not Kardama.

[1059] Brahmavarta is the area around Kurukshetra. The seven oceans are Lavana, Kshira, Sura, Ghrita, Ikshu, Dadhi and Svadu. These have been speculatively identified as Lavana (Indian Ocean), Kshira (Shirwan, part of the Caspian Sea), Sura (Sarain, the remaining part of the Caspian Sea), Ghrita (Erythraean Sea), Ikshu (the river Oxus), Dadhi (Dahae, the Aral Sea) and Svadu (Tchadun, the river in Mongolia).

[1060] The *Samkhya* texts.

[1061] Vishnu.

[1062] This is taken to mean Kardama, who performed austerities and sought refuge with him. However, the statement is general and doesn't specifically mention Kardama. Bindusaras or Bindusarovara is identified with Siddhapura (Sitpur) in Gujarat. *Bindu* means drop and *saras* means lake.

[1063] Ashoka is a tree with red flowers, karanja is the Indian beech tree, ashana is the Indian laurel, kutaja is a kind of coral tree and chuta is mango.

[1064] Chakravaka is the ruddy goose or Brahmany duck, karandava is a type of duck, plava is a diving aquatic bird, chakora is a partridge.

[1065] Kind of monkey, with a tail resembling a cow's tail.

[1066] Kardama.

[1067] Brahmanas.

[1068] The vow of celibacy.

[1069] Shri is interpreted as Devahuti's ornaments, but there seems to be no reason to do this.

[1070] That is, withdraw from the householder stage.

[1071] At being separated from her.

[1072] Relating to adhidaivika (destiny), adhibhoutika (nature) and adhyatmika (one's own nature).

[1073] Parvati.

[1074] Kardama.

[1075] That is, before she could speak.

[1076] Female vidyadharas.

[1077] This can be interpreted in two ways. The moon, the lord of the stars, makes night lotuses bloom. Alternatively, Kardama is the moon, the vimana is the sky, the maidens are the stars and the eyes of the maidens are night lotuses.

[1078] As mentioned before, the kulachalas are Mahendra, Malaya, Sahya, Shuktiman, Riksha, Vindhya and Pariyatra. Their Indra is Mount Meru.

[1079] Lokapalas are guardians of the world and the directions. The eight lokapalas are Kubera, Yama, Indra, Varuna, Ishana, Agni, Vayu and Nirriti.

[1080] Ganga.

[1081] Dhanada, Kubera.

[1082] Manasa may also mean Lake Manasa.

[1083] Yoga has eight elements—yama (restraint), niyama (rituals), asana (posture), pranayama (breathing), pratyahara (withdrawal), dharana (retention), dhyana (meditation) and samadhi (liberation). That's the reason the expression ashtanga (eight-limbed) yoga is used. Dama is control of the senses and can be equated with yama.

[1084] And also Devahuti, though she is not specifically mentioned.

[1085] Vishnu killed two demons named Madhu and Kaitabha.

[1086] Sanatkumara and his brothers.

[1087] The word used is Hamsa, meaning Brahma.

[1088] Indra.

[1089] Kardama went to Kapila. Vishnu is known as Triyuga because he has appeared in satya yuga, treta yuga and dvapara yuga, but not in kali yuga.

[1090] The three gunas.

[1091] Resort to sannyasa.

[1092] Transcendantal, about the atman.

[1093] Since the left is inauspicious, the person being circumambulated must be kept to the right.
[1094] Happiness and unhappiness, heat and cold and so on.
[1095] The wheel of life, the circle of birth and death.
[1096] To objects of the senses.
[1097] Truths, principles.
[1098] Of birth and death.
[1099] These shlokas have diverse interpretations. Given the way we have translated it, Pradhana is unmanifest and undifferentiated, while Prakriti is manifest and differentiated.
[1100] Five tanmatras or subtle elements, five mahabhutas or gross elements, five organs of perception, five organs of action, manas (mind), buddhi (intelligence), ahamkara (ego) and chitta (consciousness).
[1101] The mind creates doubt, intelligence leads to conclusions, ego leads to pride and consciousness results in remembrance.
[1102] Thus identifying itself with the body.
[1103] Prakriti.
[1104] This is the darkness at the time of destruction, when Mahat is absorbed back into Prakriti and Vishnu sleeps.
[1105] Through contact with other objects like the earth.
[1106] Respectively associated with sattva, rajas and tamas.
[1107] The breath of life is also created from taijasa ahamkara.
[1108] Receiving and conveying to the nose and the ear.
[1109] Colour and form.
[1110] Mahat, ahamkara and the elements.
[1111] Interpreted as Indra.
[1112] Brahma.
[1113] Virat Purusha.
[1114] Surya.
[1115] Kshetrajna.
[1116] Respectively, gods, humans and subhuman.
[1117] The atman.
[1118] Prakriti.
[1119] Consciousness.
[1120] Emancipation.
[1121] Is not born again.

[1122] Bija is a mystic akshara from a mantra. When yoga has such an object of meditation, it is *sabija*. When meditation is on the atman, without any other object, it is *nirbija*.

[1123] Pursuit of dharma (ordinary), artha and kama.

[1124] The chakras in the body are *muladhara*, svadhishthana, manipura, anahata, *vishuddha*, ajna and *sahasrara*. As used in the text, svadhishthana probably means any of the first six chakras and not specifically the svadhishthana chakra.

[1125] Respectively inhalation, retention and exhalation.

[1126] Ganga.

[1127] The sign of the vajra on the foot.

[1128] The creator means Brahma. Since Brahma was created by Vishnu, Lakshmi is Brahma's mother by extension.

[1129] Garuda's.

[1130] The flower of flax, *Linum usitatissimum*. Vishnu's complexion is often likened to this flower.

[1131] Brahma.

[1132] Lakshmi.

[1133] When the ocean was being churned.

[1134] Sudarshana chakra.

[1135] Both are white.

[1136] The name of Vishnu's club.

[1137] Koustubha.

[1138] A lotus.

[1139] Which take it to be a lotus. The eyes are being compared to fish.

[1140] Relating to adhidaivika (destiny), adhibhoutika (nature) and adhyatmika (one's own nature).

[1141] Makaradhvaja is the one with the makara on his banner and means Madana. Madana distracts the sages from their meditations and Hari's smile distracts Madana.

[1142] This is interpreted in diverse ways, such as the following. Initially, the mind meditates on Hari, the hook. Once a person has progressed, the hook is no longer necessary and the person can meditate directly on the atman.

[1143] That is, ahamkara.

[1144] The text uses the word *prapancha*. This has many meanings, but visible world fits best.

[1145] The other things are the senses and the mind.
[1146] This probably means that the devotee sees himself as distinct from the brahman.
[1147] Respectively, residence in the same world as Vishnu, powers like Vishnu, residing near Vishnu, forms like Vishnu and union with Vishnu.
[1148] Rather than the fire.
[1149] Meaning ashtanga yoga.
[1150] Indra.
[1151] Probably implying fraudulent.
[1152] Hell or birth as inferior species.
[1153] The jivatman.
[1154] A yojana is a measure of distance, between 8 and 9 miles.
[1155] As human, after having been born as inferior species several times.
[1156] Of the sperm and the ovum.
[1157] *Karkandhu*.
[1158] Plasma, blood, muscle, fat, bone, marrow and seminal fluid. These are known as the seven dhatus.
[1159] Alternatively, the membrane covering the embryo.
[1160] Entering many wombs.
[1161] Insects and worms.
[1162] Brahma.
[1163] Interpreted as the linga sharira.
[1164] But this is not true of the jivatman.
[1165] Tasks with a motive.
[1166] Brahma is also destroyed.
[1167] They are still proud of their devotion to Brahma. Thus, they are born again.
[1168] Brahma.
[1169] Between the jivatman and the paramatman.
[1170] Brahma.
[1171] The rishis.
[1172] Dharma, artha and kama.
[1173] Dakshinayana.
[1174] That is, in the same families.
[1175] Five organs of perception, five organs of action and the mind.
[1176] The path of knowledge.

[1177] Pravritti is action with a desire for the fruits, whereas nivritti is action without a desire for the fruits.

[1178] While this could mean the four ashramas, it probably means sattva, rajas and tamas and the one which is beyond these three.

[1179] It is possible to interpret this in many ways, the simplest is that Kapila founded the samkhya school.

[1180] From me.

[1181] Interpreted as thrice a day.

[1182] Akhandala is Indra's name.

[1183] Vishnu's body.

[1184] Interpreted as celestial beings who took care of her.

[1185] The stage of emancipation, when everything is extinguished.

[1186] Manu gave her to Ruchi. A putrika is a daughter who is regarded as a son. After marriage, she lives in her father's household. Her son is regarded as her father's son and becomes the heir. Ruchi and Akuti's son would thus be brought up as Manu's son. This is usually done when the father doesn't have a son. Here, this wasn't the case, since Manu had sons named Priyavrata and Uttanapada.

[1187] Dakshina means the fee given at sacrifices.

[1188] The goddess of riches is Lakshmi. The separation bit can be interpreted as Lakshmi never being separated from Vishnu, or as Dakshina never being separated from Yajna.

[1189] Dakshina desired Yajna.

[1190] From one manvantara to another manvantara, Manu, the gods, the saptarshis and Indra (the title of the ruler of the gods) varies.

[1191] Purniman's.

[1192] Ganga.

[1193] They were respectively born as parts of Vishnu, Shiva and Brahma.

[1194] The Riksha mountains are the eastern part of the Vindhya range.

[1195] Today, this is known as the Newaz/Newaj, in Madhya Pradesh.

[1196] Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.

[1197] The respective mounts of Shiva, Brahma and Vishnu. The signs mean a water pot (*kamandalu*) for Brahma, a trident for Shiva and sudarshana chakra for Vishnu.

[1198] Sinivali is the deity (and the day) for the day preceding the night of the new moon; Kuhu is the deity (and the day) for the night of the new moon; Raka is the deity (and the day) for the night of the full moon and Anumati is the deity (and the day) for the fourteenth night of shukla paksha.

[1199] Meaning the digestive fire.

[1200] Vishrava's wife.

[1201] Vibhishana's mother was Keshini.

[1202] Also known as Arundhati.

[1203] Mrikanda from Ayati and Prana from Niyati.

[1204] Shukracharya.

[1205] Aja is Brahma's name.

[1206] Shiva.

[1207] Krishna is also one of Arjuna's names.

[1208] These are different categories of ancestors. For example, Ajyapas accept oblations of ghee, Soumyas (Somapas) accept soma and so on.

[1209] Svadha.
[1210] The Prajapatis.
[1211] Daksha.
[1212] Sharva is one of Shiva's names.
[1213] Shiva's name, one who delights the world.
[1214] The Vedas.
[1215] A preta is a ghost, the spirit of a dead person, or simply something evil. A bhuta has the same meaning. Strictly speaking, there are differences between preta, bhuta and pishacha (one who lives on flesh). A preta is the spirit (not necessarily evil) of a dead person before the funeral rites have been performed. A bhuta (not necessarily evil again) is the spirit of a dead person who has had a violent death and for whom, proper funeral rites have not been performed, and may not even be performed. A pishacha (necessarily evil) is created deliberately through evil powers. Pramatha is an evil spirit who torments.
[1216] The word Shiva means auspicious.
[1217] Brahma.
[1218] The word used is *pashanda*.
[1219] Sura is a general term for liquor. Asava is made through distillation, not mere fermentation.
[1220] The way of the Vedas.
[1221] Meaning Shiva.
[1222] The one without birth, meaning Shiva.
[1223] The one with the dark throat, Shiva's name.
[1224] Whether she went or not.
[1225] Nandi.
[1226] A sarika bird is a kind of thrush, *Turdus salica*, a talking bird kept as a pet.
[1227] For her to play.
[1228] Daksha.
[1229] Meaning Daksha, who was performing the sacrifice.
[1230] To make it clear, we have taken a few liberties with the text.
[1231] 'Shi' and 'va'.
[1232] Daksha's daughter.
[1233] Brought equilibrium between prana and apana.
[1234] Manipura chakra.
[1235] Shiva.

[1236] There are three sacred fires at any sacrifice—ahavaniya (to the east), dakshinagni (to the south) and garhapatya (the fire for the householder).
[1237] Sati.
[1238] Shiva's name, the one with matted hair on his head.
[1239] Virabhadra, his name is mentioned later.
[1240] Yama.
[1241] Daksha.
[1242] King Prachinabarchi, who punished bandits.
[1243] Daksha's wife.
[1244] Shiva's.
[1245] Brahma.
[1246] When Daksha insulted Shiva.
[1247] Meaning Virabhadra.
[1248] Shiva.
[1249] Virabhadra.
[1250] There was a gambling match, at which, Balarama had been deceived. Therefore, he had knocked out the teeth of Dantavakra, the king of Kalinga.
[1251] The three-eyed one, Virabhadra.
[1252] Virabhadra again, Virabhadra being one of Shiva's forms.
[1253] Pashupati.
[1254] Daksha.
[1255] Kailasa.
[1256] Indra.
[1257] Pura means Tripura. Shiva destroyed a city (actually three cities together) of the demons, named Tripura.
[1258] Mandara is the coral tree, parijata is also the coral tree, sarala is a kind of pine, tamala is the sacred garlic pearl tree, shala is a kind of tree, tala is the palm tree, kovidara is a kind of orchid, asana (should read ashana) is the Indian laurel, arjuna is a tall tree, chuta is mango, kadamba is a kind of tree, nipa is another name for the kadamba tree, naga (nagakeshara) is a flowering tree, punnaga is nutmeg, champaka is a tree with yellow and fragrant flowers, patala is the *Bignonia suaveolens*, ashoka is *Saraca indica*, bakula is a tree with fragrant flowers, kunda is a kind of jasmine and kurabaka is a kind of amaranth tree.
[1259] The prickly chaff flower.
[1260] Jasmine.
[1261] The hiptage shrub.

[1262] The cluster fig tree.
[1263] The holy fig tree.
[1264] Also a holy fig tree.
[1265] The banyan tree.
[1266] *Priyala*s.
[1267] Honey trees.
[1268] A medicinal tree.
[1269] Kind of ox.
[1270] A sharabha is a mythical eight-footed animal, believed to prey on lions.
[1271] Meaning, full of fragrance.
[1272] Interpreted as Vishnu.
[1273] Kubera, Kubera's capital is the city of Alaka.
[1274] *Raktakantha*, the Indian cuckoo.
[1275] Kubera.
[1276] This is known as the *virasana* posture.
[1277] Literally, this means the posture adopted for debating and arguing. The tip of the thumb touches the index finger. The other fingers are close together and are held out straight. Tarka mudra specifically refers to the position of the hands, rather than the overall posture. It is also known as *jnana mudra*.
[1278] This probably means the wooden support placed under an armpit, so that the erect posture can be maintained. But the expression is also used for a strap of cloth that is used to keep the left knee in place.
[1279] Brahma.
[1280] Indra.
[1281] In the course of the vamana incarnation.
[1282] That is, Daksha followed the recommended path of sacrifices.
[1283] But why should you succumb to rage?
[1284] The text uses the word *shunashira*, which means a particular class of gods.
[1285] A he-goat. Ka means Daksha here.
[1286] Virabhadra and the others.
[1287] Garuda's wings are the Sama Veda hymns, Brihat and Rathantara.
[1288] Lakshmi.
[1289] Shiva.
[1290] Brahma.

[1291] Prajapatis.
[1292] A reference to the three Vedas.
[1293] Of the officiating priests.
[1294] Lakshmi.
[1295] Daksha's wife.
[1296] Because we are still attached to bodies and material objects.
[1297] Five forms means five kinds of sacrifice—agnihotra, *darsha*, *purnamasa*, *chaturmasya* and *pashusoma*. The five hymns from the Yajur Veda are *ashravaya*, *shroushat*, *yaja*, *ye yajamahe* and *vashat*.
[1298] Human body.
[1299] The person performing the sacrifice and his wife.
[1300] The three Vedas.
[1301] The sacrifice.
[1302] Shiva.
[1303] Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.
[1304] Presumably both means principal and secondary sacrifices.
[1305] This is known as *avabhritha*, the purifying bath at the end of a sacrifice.
[1306] Mrisha means falsehood, *dambha* means insolence and maya means deceit. Dambha (male) married Maya (female) and Nirriti adopted this couple.
[1307] *Lobha* means avarice, *nikriti* means wickedness, *krodha* means anger, *himsa* means violence, *kali* means dissension and *durukti* means harsh speech.
[1308] *Bhaya* means fear, *mrityu* means death, *yatana* means excessive pain and *niraya* means hell. Bhaya (male) married Mrityu (female).
[1309] Puraka, rechaka and kumbhaka.
[1310] To the cycle of birth and death.
[1311] A mantra used for meditating and chanting.
[1312] That is, divine and semi-divine species.
[1313] *Oum! namo bhagavate vasudevaya*. There are twelve askharas (syllables) in this mantra.
[1314] Dhruva.
[1315] Dhruva.
[1316] Dhruva.
[1317] Brahma.
[1318] Potentially, and thus create it.

[1319] In general, the senses.
[1320] Since the brahman is impersonal.
[1321] Ananta's.
[1322] Brahma.
[1323] What is intended is unclear. It could be the three Vedas, the three gunas, or past, present and future.
[1324] Alternatively, the world known as Dhruva's world. The word *dhruva* means eternal. Dhruva is the Pole Star.
[1325] At the time of threshing.
[1326] That is, it will not be destroyed when a kalpa is over.
[1327] The sages are the saptarshis, the constellation of Ursa Major.
[1328] Not suffering from old age.
[1329] Meaning Ursa Major.
[1330] Dhruva.
[1331] There is no second to the omnipresent atman.
[1332] Dhruva.
[1333] That is stepson.
[1334] This sentence is such that it can also be translated as, 'He (also) had a daughter who was a jewel among women.'
[1335] As will be clear, the auspicious person is a yaksha/guhyaka and the mountain is the Himalayas. The city is Alaka.
[1336] Female yakshas. The male yakshas are referred to as minor gods.
[1337] Each of them struck him with six arrows.
[1338] Catapults.
[1339] A lion.
[1340] As will be clear, this is a suggestion that the *narayanastra* be used.
[1341] Narayana rishi's.
[1342] Svayambhuva Manu.
[1343] Or from the linga sharira.
[1344] In the presence of a magnet.
[1345] Such as Brahma.
[1346] Anger.
[1347] Shiva. Both Gireesha and Girisha are Shiva's names. We have written both as Girisha. Gireesha means lord of the mountains, while Girisha means someone who lies down on a mountain.
[1348] In the singular, meaning Kubera.
[1349] Manu.

[1350] The physical body.
[1351] King of kings, a term used to refer to Kubera.
[1352] Of ignorance.
[1353] Aidavida means Idavida's son and is Kubera's name. Kubera's father was the sage Vishrava and his mother was Idavida (also known as Ilavida).
[1354] Dhruva.
[1355] That is, not for Vishnu, but sacrifices with offerings for the gods.
[1356] Dharma, artha and kama.
[1357] The paramatman.
[1358] Something not real.
[1359] Badarikashrama.
[1360] Vishnu.
[1361] Madhusudana, Vishnu.
[1362] Interpreted as the saptarshis.
[1363] The vimana.
[1364] Sunanda and Nanda.
[1365] The saptarshis.
[1366] Worst among kshatriyas, in this case, meaning an ordinary kshatriya.
[1367] Day preceding the night of the new moon.
[1368] *Dvadashi*.
[1369] Vyatipata is an inauspicious period that lasts for almost twenty-four hours during every lunar month.
[1370] More commonly known as *sankranti*. This is the time when the sun moves from one rashi (sign of the zodiac) to the next. There are twelve sankramanas in a year, though some are better known than others.
[1371] The Prachetas.
[1372] *Prabha* means the light of the day, *dosha* means night. *Pratar* is morning, *madhyadin* is midday and *sayam* is evening. *Pradosha* is late evening or the first part of the night, *nishitha* is midnight and *vyushta* is the latter part of the night, just before dawn.
[1373] Sarvateja.
[1374] Chakshusha Manu, after Svayambhuva Manu.
[1375] Not to be confused with the earlier Pushkarini, Vyushta's wife.
[1376] Anga.
[1377] Vena was killed by the curse. Prithu was born through the churning of the hand. There was no king because Vena had died without any sons.
[1378] Anga.

[1379] Anga.

[1380] The cake is *purodasa*, made out of ground rice. Shipivishta is Vishnu in the form of the sacrifice, the form of the sacrificial fire, or the form of the sacrificial animal.

[1381] A dish made out sweetened milk and rice.

[1382] Mrityu is Death and Sunitha was Mrityu's daughter.

[1383] The root *ven* means someone who is jealous and harasses people.

[1384] The king thought this.

[1385] Compassion, forgiveness, cleanliness, lack of jealousy, altruism, lack of greed, purity and self-control.

[1386] Surya.

[1387] The earth.

[1388] Humkara means to utter the sound 'hum', a sound believed to possess special powers.

[1389] Interpreted as herbs and mantras.

[1390] Alternatively, a man who was a dwarf. *Bahuka* means a dwarf, or a servile and dependent person.

[1391] The word nishida means 'sit down'. The *nishada*s were hunters who dwelt in mountains and forests.

[1392] The male.

[1393] The female.

[1394] The word *prithu* means extensive, great, abundant.

[1395] She will be Prithu's wife.

[1396] Vishnu.

[1397] Brahma.

[1398] On the palm.

[1399] Sarasvati.

[1400] This world and the next.

[1401] He will collect taxes at the right time and spend them at the right time, just as the sun evaporates water during the summer and showers it down during the monsoon.

[1402] Indra.

[1403] Varuna.

[1404] The sacrificial fire.

[1405] Mount Manasa has been identified as being near Lake Manasa. It is a mountain that is believed to be to the east of Mount Meru and the sun's chariot uses this as an axis to revolve around.

[1406] A king is known as rajan because he delights (*ranjayati*) the subjects.
[1407] Udaya is the mountain from behind which the sun rises.
[1408] He decided that the earth was hiding foodgrains, plants and herbs.
[1409] One who holds up (*dhara*) the earth (*dhara*).
[1410] Rudra.
[1411] Specifically, Shiva's bull, Nandi.
[1412] Dattatreya.
[1413] The four types of food are those that are chewed (*charvya*), sucked (*choshya* or *chushya*), licked (*lehya*) and drunk (*peya*).
[1414] Indra.
[1415] Jatayu.
[1416] Indra.
[1417] Someone who has conquered (*vijita*) a horse (*ashva*).
[1418] Hari, the tawny one, is also one of Indra's names.
[1419] A khatvanga is a staff with a skull on top. A khatvanga and a skull are the marks of a special kind of ascetic known as *kapalaka*. Therefore, Prithu's son did not obstruct him.
[1420] Meaning Vijitashva.
[1421] Indra.
[1422] Khanda means a mark and something that is deficient.
[1423] Prithu.
[1424] Brahma is now speaking to Prithu.
[1425] About the sacrifice not having been completed.
[1426] Indra.
[1427] The gods.
[1428] The brahmanas said this.
[1429] Prithu.
[1430] Even those who cause them injury.
[1431] This shloka has several nuances of interpretation.
[1432] A share of the sins committed by the people.
[1433] Garuda.
[1434] Lakshmi.
[1435] Lakshmi.
[1436] Vishnu's words are interpreted as the Vedas. If the rites of the Vedas are not important, why will anyone follow them?
[1437] The city.
[1438] Maitreya.

[1439] The text uses the word *arabdha*, meaning *arabdha karma*, the good deeds of the past that have now matured and can bear fruits.

[1440] The seven dvipas (continents) of the world are Jambu, Plaksha, Shalmali, Kusha, Krouncha, Shaka and Pushkara.

[1441] Family name, denoting common lineage.

[1442] Because this benefits the king in the next world.

[1443] Alternatively, bodies.

[1444] There must be a superior entity who dispenses the fruits of good and bad karma.

[1445] Brahma.

[1446] Vena.

[1447] Dharma, artha and kama.

[1448] Ganga.

[1449] The gods.

[1450] The brahmanas addressed Prithu in this way.

[1451] Prithu.

[1452] These were the Kumaras, Sanatkumara and the others, sons born through Brahma's mental powers. Since Shiva was born later from Brahma, they were Shiva's elder brothers.

[1453] Therefore, you already know the answer and need not have asked.

[1454] Happiness and unhappiness and so on.

[1455] The wood from which it has been kindled.

[1456] Such as a mirror.

[1457] He is born as a vegetable or a tree.

[1458] A superior or an inferior birth.

[1459] Time.

[1460] Kama (desire), krodha (anger), lobha (avarice), moha (delusion), *mada* (arrogance) and *matsarya* (jealousy). Alternatively, the five senses and the mind.

[1461] He got his kingdom and his own body because of the sages. Therefore, these are like leftovers and leftovers must not be given to a guest.

[1462] Prithu.

[1463] Meru.

[1464] Yama.

[1465] Shiva.

[1466] The god of love, Kama.

[1467] Brahma.

[1468] Agriculture, habitations, etc.

[1469] Four fires in four directions and the sun overhead.

[1470] The five senses and the mind.

[1471] This is subject to interpretation. He was not interested in the siddhis that yoga brings. He was no longer interested in yoga or knowledge.

[1472] The jivatman with the paramatman.

[1473] The chakras in the body are muladhara (base of the spine), svadhishthana (at the root of the sexual organs), manipura (navel), anahata (heart), vishuddha (throat), ajna (between the brows) and sahasrara (crown of the head). Though the text doesn't mention each of these chakras, that is what is meant.

[1474] Antardhana was Vijitashva's name.

[1475] At the time of Prithu's horse sacrifice.

[1476] *Barhi* is sacrificial grass like kusha. In a sacrifice, the blade of the kusha grass must point towards the east. Barhishad means someone who seats himself on barhi grass. Since the grass pointed towards the east (*prachi*), Barhishad was also known as Prachinabarhi.

[1477] Brahma.

[1478] Agni had fallen in love with the wives of the saptarshis. To dissuade him, Svaha, Agni's wife, assumed the form of a female parrot (*shuki*) so as to seduce him.

[1479] Vishnu.

[1480] Gandharvas and kinnaras.

[1481] Barhishad's name.

[1482] This shloka is interpreted in many different ways.

[1483] Every shloka in this invocation has layers of interpretation.

[1484] The three Vedas.

[1485] The doer, the instrument and the action.

[1486] Rudra.

[1487] A touchstone is used to test for gold. Shri, in the form of the shrivatsa mark, is always on the chest.

[1488] There is an implicit image of the Ganga flowing through the feet.

[1489] Those who follow karma yoga or jnana yoga.

[1490] Those born from wombs, those born from eggs, those born from sweat and trees and herbs.

[1491] And not perceive it directly.

[1492] Brahma.

[1493] This is an allegory. Puranjana means someone who lives inside a city, the body being compared to a city. Avijnata is the atman.

[1494] The nine gates of the body are two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, the mouth, the anus and the genital organs.

[1495] Parks.

[1496] That is, they were non-violent.

[1497] Continuing with the allegory, the woman is intelligence (buddhi) and the ten servants are the ten senses. Each sense has several inclinations (the wives).

[1498] The five hoods are prana, apana, vyana, samana and udana.

[1499] The text uses the word *shyama*. The word shyama usually means dark. Shyama has a secondary meaning of a woman who has not borne children. That meaning seems more appropriate here.

[1500] Modesty personified, Parvati and Sarasvati respectively.

[1501] Lakshmi.

[1502] The one born from the mind, Kama, the god of love.

[1503] The two eyes, the two nostrils, the two ears and the mouth were above. The genital organs and the anus were below.

[1504] When one faced the east, the two eyes, the two nostrils and the mouth faced the east. The right ear was to the south and the left ear was to the north. The genital organs and the anus were to the west.

[1505] The two eyes.

[1506] The two nostrils.

[1507] The mouth.

[1508] The right ear hears rituals that are for the path of the ancestors (*pitri*s).

[1509] The left ear hears rituals that are for the path of the gods (*deva*s).

[1510] Named after the asuras.

[1511] Where one indulges in *gramya* (sensual and sexual) pursuits.

[1512] Literally, without speech and without form.

[1513] The chariot is his body, the five horses are the five senses, the two shafts are notions of 'I' and 'mine', the two wheels are good deeds and bad deeds, the axle is innate nature, the three bamboo poles are the three gunas, the five joints between the yoke and the pole are the five aspects of the breath of life, the rein is the mind, the charioteer is intelligence, the seat is the heart, the two poles for the yoke are grief and delusion, the five types of equipment are the five objects of the senses, the seven bumpers are the sev-

en sheaths of the body, the five kinds of movement are the five organs of action, the bow is attachment, the inexhaustible quiver represents infinite desire and the eleven commanders are the ten senses and the mind.

[1514] Gavaya.

[1515] Brahmanas.

[1516] Mura's enemy, Krishna.

[1517] Tilaka is a mark made on the forehead.

[1518] They were wet with tears.

[1519] The arrows of the god of love are made out of flowers.

[1520] Puranjana's wife.

[1521] He forgot about his own atman.

[1522] Puranjana.

[1523] Old age.

[1524] The gandharvas stand for days. The gandharva women stand for nights, the fair ones from shukla paksha and the dark ones from krishna paksha.

[1525] Puranjana.

[1526] The daughter of Kala (Time) is meant to signify old age.

[1527] The unfortunate one.

[1528] Puru's father was Yayati. Though Yayati had turned old, his desires had not been extinguished. He asked his sons to take over his old age and temporarily grant him their youth, until his desires were satisfied. The son who agreed to do this was Puru.

[1529] Of brahmacharya. Hence, Narada refused.

[1530] Bhaya means fear.

[1531] Durbhaga is telling Bhaya this.

[1532] A kind of fever.

[1533] Physical and mental ailments.

[1534] The serpent.

[1535] Avijnata.

[1536] At the time of his death, he had been thinking of Puranjani.

[1537] In the king of Vidarbha's house. Alternatively, Rajasimha can be taken as an adjective, meaning a lion among kings.

[1538] Out of the seven kulachalas, this is likely to have been Malaya.

[1539] Of Puranjana.

[1540] Six families for the five senses and the mind.

[1541] As a metaphor for pure consciousness.

[1542] The being chooses his own body.
[1543] Rasavit is the same as Rasajna.
[1544] The queen's, that is, Buddhi's.
[1545] Rasa (plasma), rakta (blood), mamsa (flesh), meda (fat), asthi (bones), majja (nerve or marrow) and shukra (semen, reproductive tissue).
[1546] The organs of action.
[1547] Adding the mind to the five sense of perception and the five of action.
[1548] The wicked pursuit of the five objects of the senses.
[1549] The two types of fever are those that result from high temperatures and those that result from low temperatures.
[1550] Respectively associated with sattva, tamas and rajas.
[1551] Like heaven.
[1552] Sufferings related to adhidaivika (destiny), adhibhoutika (nature) and adhyatmika (one's own nature).
[1553] Brahma.
[1554] Therefore, since it has no direct manifestation, how is it carried forward to the next life?
[1555] Senses of perception and senses of action.
[1556] The dark one is Rahu. Rahu can only be seen at the time of an eclipse, on the lunar (or solar) disc.
[1557] Including the mind.
[1558] The five flows of prana, the mind and the ten senses.
[1559] The linga sharira.
[1560] This is interpreted as the way a caterpillar moves, clinging to a new blade before it lets go off the old blade. Though not impossible, it would be far-fetched to interpret this as metamorphosis into a butterfly.
[1561] Koustubha.
[1562] Sudarshana chakra, club, lotus, bow, arrow, sword, shield, conch shell. The conch shell and the lotus are weapons by extension.
[1563] Both dawn and dusk.
[1564] Kandu was a sage and Pramlocha was an apsara. After delivering her daughter, Pramlocha returned to heaven.
[1565] Moksha.
[1566] As in the small measure of time.
[1567] The fire of universal destruction.
[1568] This means Daksha, who had shown disrespect to Shiva. Earlier, Daksha had been born through Brahma's mental powers. But he was now

born as Marisha's biological son.

[1569] *Daksha* means skilled and accomplished.

[1570] Brahma.

[1571] The Prachetas.

[1572] Daksha.

[1573] A sage.

[1574] Associated with the three Vedas.

[1575] During the summer, the sun sucks up water into the clouds. During the monsoon, this is showered down as rain.

Acknowledgements

The corpus of the Puranas is immense, in scope, as well as in length. Taken together, the eighteen Puranas are four times the size of the Mahabharata. If the prospect of translating the Mahabharata seemed challenging, the task of translating the Puranas was/is downright disconcerting and intimidating. After the Mahabharata, the Harivamsha and the Valmiki Ramayana, it was a natural transition, the obvious thing to do. However, it seemed to be an impossible task. Did one dare to start? If so, where? Since there was no 'Critical Edition' of the Puranas, what text should one use? I have now come to believe what should be obvious. Everything one does is determined by destiny. One is merely an instrument, implementing someone else's will. Thus, destiny intervened. It first intervened in the form of my dear friend, Professor Ramesh Kumar Pandey, vice chancellor, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha. He suggested, in the absence of Critical Editions, one should use the Nirnaya Sagar texts. They have much greater acceptance than other versions. In addition, urging me along the road, he gifted me the Nirnaya Sagar texts of eleven of the eighteen Mahapuranas.

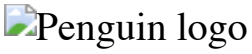
That still left a question unanswered. Which Purana should one start with? Destiny intervened yet again, in the form of another friend, Shri Yudhistir Govinda Das of ISKCON. For some time, Yudhistir had been urging us to visit Mayapur. That visit, pending for quite some time, materialized so that it synchronized with the annual Gaura Purnima festival. What better time to visit Mayapur? Yudhistir also gifted us a set of Prabhupada's translation of the Bhagavata Purana. This determined the answer to the question. The Bhagavata Purana it would have to be. One does indeed deplore the general ignorance about the treasure trove the Puranas are. The dumbed down versions one usually sees or reads are pale shadows of what these

texts actually contain. Having said this, the Purana that most people are familiar with is probably the Bhagavata Purana. Therefore, the Bhagavata Purana was a good choice. As a token of appreciation, these three volumes are dedicated to Yudhistir Govinda Das. As Yudhistir well knows, this is nothing more than a token. Dedications are meant for the one who is beyond either of us.

All these translations, ever since the Bhagavad Gita in 2006, have been published by Penguin India. I am indebted to Penguin for believing in the utility of not just the Bhagavata Purana translation, but the entire Purana Project, which still seems to stretch into the interminable horizon of the future. But one step at a time. For the record, with the Bhagavata Purana published, I am now translating Markandeya Purana, the next one in the series. In particular, Meru Gokhale and Ambar Sahil Chatterjee at Penguin India have been exceptionally patient, persevering and encouraging. But for them, the Purana Project might not have taken off. Paloma Dutta has been the editor since the days of the Mahabharata translation. That makes life a whole lot easier. She knows my style and I know hers. There is a Paloma hand in the product, even though it won't be detected and isn't meant to be.

ययोरात्मसमं वित्तं जन्मैश्वर्याकृतिर्भवः। तयोर्विवाहो मैत्री च नोत्तमाधमयोः क्वचित। (10.60.15)

Ever since this translation journey started in 2006, my wife, Suparna Banerjee (Debroy) has been a constant source of support, ensuring the conducive and propitious environment required for the work to continue unimpeded. She has been much more than that. (She was with me in Mayapur too.) In a rich language like Sanskrit, I can think of close to twenty words—all capturing the different nuances of 'wife'. Suparna has been all these and more. अनुकूलकलत्रे यस्तस्य स्वर्ग इहैव हि। प्रतिकूलकलत्रस्य नरको नात्र संशयः॥ This too is destiny.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THE BHAGAVATA PURANA

2

From the master translator of the Critical Editions
of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana

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Bibek Debroy is a renowned economist, scholar and translator. He has worked in universities, research institutes, industry and for the government. He has widely published books, papers and articles on economics. As a translator, he is best known for his magnificent rendition of the Mahabharata in ten volumes, the three-volume translation of the Valmiki Ramayana and additionally the *Harivamsha*, published to wide acclaim by Penguin Classics. He is also the author of *Sarama and Her Children*, which splices his interest in Hinduism with his love for dogs.

Praise for *the Mahabharata*

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For Yudhistir Govinda Das

Introduction

The word '*purana*' means old, ancient. The Puranas are old texts, usually referred to in conjunction with Itihasa (the Ramayana and the Mahabharata). [1] Whether Itihasa originally meant only the Mahabharata—with the Ramayana being added to that expression later—is a proposition on which there has been some discussion. But that's not relevant for our purposes. In the Chandogya Upanishad, there is an instance of the sage Narada approaching the sage Sanatkumara for instruction. When asked about what he already knew, Narada says he knows Itihasa and Purana, the Fifth Veda. [2] In other words, Itihasa–Purana possessed an elevated status. This by no means implies that the word 'purana', as used in these two Upanishads and other texts too, is to be understood in the sense of the word being applied to a set of texts known as the Puranas today. The Valmiki Ramayana is believed to have been composed by Valmiki and the Mahabharata by Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa. After composing the Mahabharata, Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa is believed to have composed the Puranas. The use of the word 'composed' immediately indicates that Itihasa–Purana are *smriti* texts, with a human origin. They are not *shruti* texts, with a divine origin. Composition does not mean these texts were rendered into writing. Instead, there was a process of oral narration, with inevitable noise in the transmission and distribution process. Writing came much later.

Frederick Eden Pargiter's book on the Puranas is still one of the best introductions to this corpus. [3] To explain the composition and transmission process, one can do no better than to quote him:

> The Vayu and Padma Puranas tell us how ancient genealogies, tales and ballads were preserved, namely, by the *sutas*, [4] and they describe the suta's duty . . . The Vayu, Brahmanda and Visnu give an account, how the original Purana came into

> existence . . . Those three Puranas say— Krsna Dvaipayana divided the single Veda into four and arranged them, and so was called Vyasa. He entrusted them to his four disciples, one to each, namely Paila, Vaisampayana, Jaimini and Sumantu. Then with tales, anecdotes, songs and lore that had come down from the ages he compiled a Purana, and taught it and the Itihasa to his fifth disciple, the suta Romaharsana or Lomaharsana . . .After that he composed the Mahabharata. The epic itself implies that the Purana preceded it . . . As explained above, the sutas had from remote times preserved the genealogies of gods, *rishi*s and kings, and traditions and ballads about celebrated men, that is, exactly the material—tales, songs and ancient lore—out of which the Purana was constructed. Whether or not Vyasa composed the original Purana or superintended its compilation, is immaterial for the present purpose . . . After the original Purana was composed, by Vyasa as is said, his disciple Romaharsana taught it to his son Ugrashravas, and Ugrashravas the *souti* [5] appears as the reciter in some of the present Puranas; and the sutas still retained the right to recite it for their livelihood. But, as stated above, Romaharsana taught it to his six disciples, at least five of whom were brahmans. It thus passed into the hands of brahmans, and their appropriation and development of it increased in the course of time, as the Purana grew into many Puranas, as Sanskrit learning became peculiarly the province of the brahmans, and as new and frankly sectarian Puranas were composed.

Pargiter cited reasons for his belief that the Mahabharata was composed before the original Purana, though that runs contrary to the popular perception about the Mahabharata having been composed before the Puranas. That popular and linear perception is too simplistic, since texts evolved parallelly, not necessarily sequentially.

In popular perception, Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa composed the Mahabharata. He then composed the Puranas. Alternatively, he composed an original core Purana text, which has been lost, and others embellished it through additions. The adjective ‘purana’, meaning old account or old text, became a proper noun, signifying a specific text. To be classified as a Purana, a Purana has to possess five attributes—*pancha lakshmana*. That is, five topics must be discussed—*sarga*, *pratisarga*, *vamsha*, *manvantara* and *vamshanucharita*. The clearest statement of this is in the Matsya Purana. A text like the Bhagavata Purana also mentions these five attributes, but adds another five, making it a total of ten. Unlike the Ramayana and the Mahab-

harata, there is no Critical Edition of the Puranas. [6] Therefore, citing chapter and verse from a Purana text is somewhat more difficult, since verse, if not chapter, may vary from text to text. With that caveat, the relevant shloka (verse) should be in the fifty-third chapter of the Matysa Purana. Sarga means the original or primary creation. The converse of sarga is universal destruction, or *pralaya*. That period of sarga lasts for one of Brahma's days, known as *kalpa*. When Brahma sleeps, during his night, there is universal destruction.

In measuring time, there is the notion of a *yuga* (era) and there are four yugas—*satya yuga* (also known as *krita yuga*), *treta yuga*, *dvapara yuga* and *kali yuga*. Satya yuga lasts for 4,000 years, treta yuga for 3,000 years, dvapara yuga for 2,000 years and kali yuga for 1,000 years. However, all these are not human years. The gods have a different timescale and these are the years of the gods. As one progressively moves from satya yuga to kali yuga, virtue (*dharma*) declines. But at the end of kali yuga, the cycle begins afresh, with satya yuga. An entire cycle, from satya yuga to kali yuga, is known as a *mahayuga* (great era). However, a mahayuga is not just 10,000 years. There is a further complication. At the beginning and the end of every yuga, there are some additional years. These additional years are 400 for satya yuga, 300 for treta yuga, 200 for dvapara yuga and 100 for kali yuga. A mahayuga thus has 12,000 years, adding years both at the beginning and at the end. 1,000 mahayugas make up one kalpa. A kalpa is also divided into fourteen *manvantara*s, a manvantara being a period during which a Manu presides and rules over creation. Therefore, there are 71.4 mahayugas in a manvantara. Our present kalpa is known as the Shveta Varaha Kalpa. Within that, six Manus have come and gone. Their names are (1) Svyambhuva Manu, (2) Svarochisha Manu, (3) Uttama Manu, (4) Tapasa Manu, (5) Raivata Manu and (6) Chakshusha Manu. The present Manu is known as Vaivasvata Manu. Vivasvat, also written as Vivasvan, is the name of Surya, the sun god. Vaivasvata Manu has that name because he is Surya's son. Not only the Manus, but the gods, the ruler of the gods and the seven great sages, known as the *saptarshi*s (seven rishis), change from one manvantara to another. Indra is a title of the ruler of the gods. It is not a

proper name. The present Indra is Purandara. However, in a different manvantara, someone else will hold the title. In the present seventh manvantara, known as Vaivasvata manvantara, there will also be 71.4 mahayugas. We are in the twenty-eighth of these. Since a different Vedavyasa performs that task of classifying and collating the Vedas in every mahayuga, Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa is the twenty-eighth in that series. Just so that it is clear, Vedavyasa isn't a proper name. It is a title conferred on someone who collates and classifies the Vedas. There have been twenty-seven who have held the title of Vedavyasa before Krishna Dvaipayana and he is the twenty-eighth. His proper name is Krishna Dvaipayana—Krishna because he was dark and Dvaipayna because he was born on an island (*dvipa*). This gives us an idea of what the topic of manvantara is about. This still leaves pratisarga, vamsha and vamshanucharita. The two famous dynasties/lineages were the solar dynasty (*survya vamsha*) and lunar dynasty (*chandra vamsha*) and all the famous kings belonged to one or other of these two dynasties. Vamshanucharita is about these lineages and the conduct of these kings. There were the gods and sages (rishis) too, not always born through a process of physical procreation. Their lineages are described under the heading of vamsha. Finally, within that cycle of primary creation and destruction, there are smaller and secondary cycles of creation and destruction. That's the domain of pratisarga. In greater or lesser degree, all the Puranas cover these five topics, some more than the others.

There are Puranas, and there are Puranas. Some are known as Sthala Puranas, describing the greatness and sanctity of a specific geographical place. Some are known as Upa-Puranas, minor Puranas. The listing of Upa-Puranas has regional variations and there is no countrywide consensus about the list of Upa-Puranas, though it is often accepted that there are eighteen of them. The Puranas we have in mind are known as Maha-Puranas, major Puranas. Henceforth, when we use the word Puranas, we mean Maha-Puranas. There is consensus that there are eighteen Maha-Puranas, though it is not obvious that this number of eighteen existed right from the beginning. The names are mentioned in several of these texts, including a shloka that follows the shloka cited from the Matsya Purana. The listing is also included

in the last sections of the Bhagavata Purana itself. Thus, the eighteen Puranas are (1) Agni (15,400); (2) Bhagavata (18,000); (3) Brahma (10,000); (4) Brahmanda (12,000); (5) Brahmavaivarta (18,000); (6) Garuda (19,000); (7) Kurma (17,000); (8) Linga (11,000); (9) Markandeya (9,000); (10) Matsya (14,000); (11) Narada (25,000); (12) Padma (55,000); (13) Shiva (24,000); (14) Skanda (81,100); (15) Vamana (10,000); (16) Varaha (24,000); (17) Vayu (24,000) and (18) Vishnu (23,000). A few additional points about this list. First, the Harivamsha is sometimes loosely described as a Purana, but strictly speaking, it is not a Purana. It is more like an addendum to the Mahabharata. Second, Bhavishya (14,500) is sometimes mentioned, with Vayu excised from the list. However, the Vayu Purana exhibits many more Purana characteristics than the Bhavishya Purana does. There are references to a Bhavishyat Purana that existed, but that may not necessarily be the Bhavishya Purana as we know it today. That's true of some other Puranas too. Texts have been completely restructured hundreds of years later. Third, it is not just a question of Bhavishya Purana and Vayu Purana. In the lists given in some Puranas, Vayu is part of the eighteen, but Agni is knocked out. In some others, Narasimha and Vayu are included, but Brahmanda and Garuda are knocked out. Fourth, when a list is given, the order also indicates some notion of priority or importance. Since that varies from text to text, our listing is simply alphabetical, according to the English alphabet.

The numbers within brackets indicate the number of shlokas each of these Puranas has, or is believed to have. The range is from 10,000 in Brahma to a mammoth 81,100 in Skanda. The aggregate is a colossal 409,500 shlokas. To convey a rough idea of the orders of magnitude, the Mahabharata has, or is believed to have, 100,000 shlokas. It's a bit difficult to convert a shloka into word counts in English, especially because Sanskrit words have a slightly different structure. However, as a very crude approximation, one shloka is roughly twenty words. Thus, 100,000 shlokas become two million words and 400,000 shlokas, four times the size of the Mahabharata, amounts to eight million words. There is a reason for using the expression 'is believed to have', as opposed to 'has'. Rendering into writing is of later

vintage, the initial process was one of oral transmission. In the process, many texts have been lost, or are retained in imperfect condition. This is true of texts in general and is also specifically true of Itihasa and Puranas. The Critical Edition of the Mahabharata, mentioned earlier, no longer possesses 100,000 shlokas. Including the Harivamsha, there are around 80,000 shlokas. The Critical Edition of the Mahabharata has of course deliberately excised some shlokas. For the Puranas, there is no counterpart of Critical Editions. However, whichever edition of the Puranas one chooses, the number of shlokas in that specific Purana will be smaller than the numbers given above. Either those many shlokas did not originally exist, or they have been lost. This is the right place to mention that a reading of the Puranas assumes a basic degree of familiarity with the Valmiki Ramayana and the Mahabharata, more the latter than the former. Without that familiarity, one will often fail to appreciate the context completely. Specifically for the Bhagavata Purana, more than passing familiarity with the Bhagavad Gita—strictly speaking, a part of the Mahabharata—helps. [7]

Other than the five attributes, the Puranas have a considerable amount of information on geography and even geological changes (changes in courses of rivers) and astronomy. Therefore, those five attributes shouldn't suggest the Puranas have nothing more. They do, and they have therefore been described as encyclopedias. Bharatavarsha is vast and heterogeneous and each Purana may very well have originated in one particular part of the country. Accordingly, within that broad compass of an overall geographical description, the extent of geographical information varies from Purana to Purana. Some are more familiar with one part of the country than with another. Though not explicitly mentioned in the five attributes, the Puranas are also about pursuing dharma, *artha, kama* and *moksha*, the four objectives of human existence, and are about the four *varna*s and the four *ashrama*s. The general understanding and practice of dharma is based much more on the Puranas than on the Vedas. Culture, notions of law, rituals, architecture and iconography are based on the Puranas. There is beautiful poetry too, included in parts of the Bhagavata Purana.

Perhaps one should mention that there are two ways these eighteen Puranas are classified. The trinity has Brahma as the creator, Vishnu as the preserver and Shiva as the destroyer. Therefore, Puranas where creation themes feature prominently are identified with Brahma (Brahma, Brahmanda, Brahmavaivarta, Markandeya). Puranas where Vishnu features prominently are identified as Vaishnava Puranas (Bhagavata, Garuda, Kurma, Matysa, Narada, Padma, Vamana, Varaha, Vishnu). Puranas where Shiva features prominently are identified as Shaiva Puranas (Agni, Linga, Shiva, Skanda, Vayu). While there is a grain of truth in this, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva are all important and all three feature in every Purana. Therefore, beyond the relative superiority of Vishnu vis-à-vis Shiva, the taxonomy probably doesn't serve much purpose. The second classification is even more tenuous and is based on the three *guna*s of *sattva* (purity), *rajas* (passion) and *tamas* (ignorance). For example, the Uttara Khanda of the Padma Purana has a few shlokas along these lines, recited by Shiva to Parvati. With a caveat similar to the one mentioned earlier, this should be in the 236th chapter of Uttara Khanda. According to this, the Puranas characterized by sattva are Bhagavata, Garuda, Narada, Padma, Varaha and Vishnu. Those characterized by rajas are Bhavishya, Brahma, Brahmanda, Brahmavaivarta, Markandeya and Vamana, Those characterized by tamas are Agni, Kurma, Linga, Matysa, Skanda and Shiva.

Within a specific Purana text, there are earlier sections, as well as later ones. That makes it difficult to date a Purana, except as a range. Across Purana texts, there are older Puranas, as well as later ones. Extremely speculatively, the dating will be something like the following. (1) Agni (800–1100 CE); (2) Bhagavata (500–1000 CE); (3) Brahma (700–1500 CE); (4) Brahmanda (400–600 CE); (5) Brahmavaivarta (700–1500 CE); (6) Garuda (800–1100 CE); (7) Kurma (600–900 CE); (8) Linga (500–1000 CE); (9) Markandeya (250–700 CE); (10) Matsya (200–500 CE); (11) Narada (900–1600 CE); (12) Padma (400–1600 CE); (13) Shiva (1000–1400 CE); (14) Skanda (600–1200 CE); (15) Vamana (450–900 CE); (16) Varaha (1000–1200 CE); (17) Vayu (350–550 CE); (18) Vishnu (300 BCE to 450 CE); and (19) Bhavishya (500–1900 CE). Reiterating once again that there is no great

precision in these ranges, by this reckoning, the Vishnu Purana is the oldest and some parts of the Bhavishya Purana are as recent as the nineteenth century.

As mentioned earlier, there is no Critical Edition for the Puranas. Therefore, one has to choose a Sanskrit text one is going to translate from. If one is going to translate all the Puranas, it is preferable, though not essential, that one opts for a common source for all the Purana texts. The common source for the Bhagavata Purana, and the subsequent Purana translations, is the one brought out by Nag Publishers, with funding from the ministry of human resource development. [8] A transliterated Sanskrit text is available through the University of Gottingen. [9] In Devanagari, the text is available at https://sanskritdocuments.org/doc_purana/bhagpur.html?lang=sa, with the transliterated Sanskrit text at http://www.sanskritweb.net/sansdocs/bhagpur.pdf. The Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies at the University of Oxford has a lot of useful resources under the umbrella of the Bhagavata Purana Research Project. [10] Among other things, this research project has published a book that is a bit like an abridged translation of the Bhagavata Purana. [11] The Bhagavata Purana is divided into twelve *skandha*s. The word skandha means trunk, or largish branch. In this context, it means section or segment. Out of these twelve skandhas, the tenth is the longest and is also the most read. Therefore, there are translations of the Bhagavata Purana that are limited to only the Tenth Skandha. Edwin Bryant's rendering of the Tenth Skandha is almost like such a translation. [12] For the entire Bhagavata Purana, there are unabridged translations in Indian languages. However, to the best of my knowledge, there are only five unabridged translations in English: (1) Manmatha Nath Dutt; [13] (2) Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada; [14] (3) Ganesh Vasudeo Tagare; [15] (4) Swami Tapasyananda; [16] and (5) C.L. Goswami and M.A. Shastri. [17] In 1901, Purnendu Narayana Sinha published a version that was close to a translation, but fell just short because it followed the path of retelling. [18] The Sanskrit texts used in these five translations vary a bit and the one used in this translation also varies a bit from the ones used in these five. The Bhagavata Purana is believed to have 18,000 shlokas. The table

below shows what this particular Sanskrit version has: just over 14,000 spread across 335 chapters. One should not jump to the conclusion that a large number of shlokas are missing. A few are indeed missing. But sometimes, it is also a question of how one counts a shloka. With the content remaining identical, the text may be counted as one shloka in one place and as two shlokas elsewhere. Our numbering is exactly the same as in the Sanskrit text we have followed. Hence, even though there may be no difference in content between our version of the text and, say, that used by Swami Prabhupada, the numbering will vary a bit. (Sometimes, there are minor differences in the Sanskrit text though.) However, there are some shlokas that are indeed missing and Ganesh Vasudeo Tagare is a good source for translations of these missing shlokas, because those missing shlokas have been separately translated there. When we have enumerated all the chapters, there are two identifying numbers that have been provided. The first number refers to the skandha, the second to the number of the chapter within the skandha. Thus, Chapter 4(30) will be the thirtieth chapter in the fourth Skandha.

Skandha	*Number of chapters*	*Number of shlokas*
1	19	811
2	10	391
3	33	1412
4	31	1450
5	26	738
6	19	855
7	15	752
8	24	929
9	24	962
10	90	3948
11	31	1360
12	13	564
Total	335	14172

In the translations of the Bhagavad Gita, the Mahabharata, the Harivamsha and the Valmiki Ramayana, we followed the principle of not using diacritical marks. The use of diacritical marks (effectively the international alphabet of Sanskrit transliteration) makes the pronunciation and rendering more accurate, but also tends to put off readers who are less academically inclined. Since diacritical marks are not being used, there is a challenge of rendering Sanskrit names in English. Sanskrit is a phonetic language and we have used that principle as a basis. Applied consistently, this means that words are rendered in ways that may seem unfamiliar. Hence, the name of the jewel, often written as Kaustubha, will appear as Koustubha here. This is true of proper names, and, in a few rare cases, of geographical names. The absence of diacritical marks causes some minor problems. How does one distinguish Vasudeva Krishna from Krishna's father, Vasudeva? Often, the context will make the difference clear. If not, we have written the son as Vaasudeva and the father as Vasudeva. In translating, the attempt has been

to provide a word-for-word translation, so that if one were to hold up the Sanskrit text, there would be a perfect match.

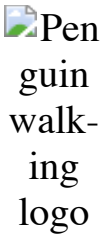
The intention is also to offer a translation, not an interpretation. That sounds like a simple principle to adopt, and for the most part, is easy to follow. However, there is a thin dividing line between translation and interpretation. In some instances, it is impossible to translate without bringing in a little bit of interpretation. Inevitably, interpretation is subjective. We have tried to minimize the problem by (a) reducing interpretation; (b) relegating interpretation to footnotes and (c) when there are alternative interpretations, pointing this out to the reader through those footnotes. If a Purana text is just about the five attributes mentioned, the task isn't that difficult. Take the Bhagavata Purana as an example. In Chapter 2(10), we are told about the ten characteristics of the Bhagavata Purana and these are sarga*, visarga, sthana, poshana, uti,* manvantara*, isha-anukatha, nirodha*, *mukti* and *ashraya*. These are (1) gross creation; (2) subtle creation; (3) preservation; (4) sustenance; (5) the addiction to the senses; (6) manvantaras; (7) accounts of the lord; (8) withdrawal; (9) liberation and (10) the ultimate refuge. Therefore, the text has much more than the five attributes cited. The word '*bhagavat*' means the divine one, the illustrious one, the fortunate one, the prosperous one, the blessed one, the sacred one, the holy one. We are often more familiar with the nominative form, *bhagavaan*. Bhagavat/Bhagavaan occur frequently in our text and I have translated the word as 'the illustrious one'. Since this is a Purana devoted to Vishnu, Bhagavat/Bhagavaan typically means Vishnu. But the text is not called Bhagavata Purana; it is in fact called Bhaagavata Purana. What does the word Bhaagavata mean? Taken as an adjective, the word means sacred and Bhaagavata Purana is simply the sacred Purana, a perfectly acceptable meaning. However, taken as a noun, Bhaagavata means a devotee or worshipper of Vishnu—and *bhaagavata dharma* is the dharma of devotion towards Vishnu. Therefore, Bhaagavata Purana is the text that describes this bhaagavata dharma that Vishnu devotees follow.

Hence, it isn't only about stories. As mentioned earlier, the longest Skandha, the tenth, is also the most popular and is read most often. This

particular skandha describes Krishna's exploits and pastimes. This includes *rasa lila* and this skandha has some exquisite poetry. The song of the *gopi*s is an example of this. As is thus obvious, this skandha has its fair share of stories. But in the other skandhas, the emphasis is more on dharma and moksha and a mix of *bhakti* (devotion), *advaita* (monism), *dvaita* (dualism), *samkhya* and *yoga*, [19] with notions of *avatara*s (Vishnu's incarnations) brought in. There is the influence of *pancharatra* doctrines and texts. Literally, the term pancharatra means five nights, and is a reference to five nights over which sacrifices were performed. However, there were pancharatra doctrines too and these developed a metaphysical philosophy. If we so wish, we can call it a theology. Vaishnava dharma integrated this pancharatra tradition with the other strands that have just been mentioned. Since this is a synthesis of many different strands, there are bound to be nuances and different schools. What does the Bhagavata Purana teach? What is its philosophy? Beyond the obvious tenet of devotion to Vishnu and emphasis on bhakti yoga, this is extremely difficult to answer. As a text that builds a theology, the Bhagavata Purana is much more complicated than the Bhagavad Gita. Indeed, one could say it builds extensively on that Bhagavad Gita foundation. Down the years, there have been several commentaries on and interpretations of the Bhagavata Purana. Depending on the language and the timeline for beginning and ending the cut-off, there must be at least two hundred such commentaries and interpretations. Which of these schools or interpretations should one follow? Should one take cognizance of other possible interpretations? In principle, this dilemma can exist in the course of translating any Purana. But in no other Purana is it as serious, because no other Purana devotes such a large percentage of shlokas to philosophy.

The choice in this translation is conscious and is driven by the objective and the target audience. The target audience is the ordinary reader who desires a faithful rendering of the Sanskrit text. The target reader isn't the academic who desires something like a survey of literature. Nor is the target reader a devotee of one particular Vaishnava school. To state it a bit more explicitly, Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, Swami Tapasyananda and C.L. Goswami and M.A. Shastri follow one particular line of commentary

or interpretation or school. From an academic's perspective, Ganesh Vasudeo Tagare is the best. His translation also includes an excellent introduction and a detailed note on several different commentators of the Bhagavata Purana, certainly covering the major ones. However, apart from the language of the Tagare rendition not being very smooth, that edition is also layered with complexities which can deter the ordinary reader. On the other hand, I have consciously done what is akin to a contemporary Manmatha Nath Dutt translation. Without distorting, I have chosen the simplest possible interpretation or translation that fits. In a few minor instances, this meant choosing an interpretation that was marginally different from those chosen by these preceding translators. It is possible to criticize the avoidance of complexities, but it is a conscious choice and the dissatisfied reader can always go on to read more copious commentaries and annotations. There is plenty in the Bhagavata Purana to immerse oneself in and this translation is not meant to be the final item on that reading list. It can at best be the first.


Penguin walking logo

Fifth Skandha

Chapter 5(1): 40 shlokas
Chapter 5(2): 23 shlokas
Chapter 5(3): 21 shlokas
Chapter 5(4): 18 shlokas
Chapter 5(5): 36 shlokas
Chapter 5(6): 19 shlokas
Chapter 5(7): 14 shlokas
Chapter 5(8): 32 shlokas
Chapter 5(9): 22 shlokas
Chapter 5(10): 26 shlokas
Chapter 5(11): 18 shlokas
Chapter 5(12): 16 shlokas
Chapter 5(13): 26 shlokas
Chapter 5(14): 46 shlokas
Chapter 5(15): 16 shlokas
Chapter 5(16): 29 shlokas
Chapter 5(17): 25 shlokas
Chapter 5(18): 39 shlokas
Chapter 5(19): 31 shlokas
Chapter 5(20): 69 shlokas
Chapter 5(21): 22 shlokas
Chapter 5(22): 19 shlokas
Chapter 5(23): 9 shlokas
Chapter 5(24): 51 shlokas
Chapter 5(25): 17 shlokas
Chapter 5(26): 54 shlokas

Chapter 5(1)

The king asked, 'O sage! Priyavrata was devoted to the illustrious one and found delight in his own *atman*. Why did he find delight in the householder stage, which is the root cause behind the bondage of action and the reason for defeat? O bull among *brahmana*s! Those like him are certainly free from attachment. Why should a man like that be engaged in the householder stage? O *brahmana rishi*! Uttamashloka's [1] feet are indeed great. If a person's intelligence is satisified with that stage, his mind cannot have any desire for a family. O brahmana! There is a great doubt that I have about this attachment to a wife, a home, sons and other things, when the mind is fixed and has found success in Krishna.'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'What you have said is correct. A person tastes the nectar from the illustrious Uttamashloka's beautiful lotus feet. Such a devotee of the illustrious one is a *paramahamsa* [2] and his mind is immersed in his beloved account. However, sometimes, there are obstructions that prevent him from obtaining that most auspicious state, and generally, he has to abandon it. O king! Prince Priyavrata was indeed a supreme devotee of the illustrious one. Serving at Narada's feet, he easily got to know about the supreme objective and truth. He wished to consecrate himself for worshipping the *brahman*. [3] But his own father [4] asked him to protect the earth, since he was the only one who possessed the aggregate of the excellent qualities mentioned in the sacred texts. Through meditation and *yoga*, he had already dedicated all his senses and all the rites completely to the illustrious Vasudeva. Therefore, he did not welcome the command, but it wasn't one that could be refused. He did foresee that this act of ruling would lead to his defeat, since it would engage him with the transient. The illustrious original god, born from his own self, [5] knows the purpose behind the entire universe and its welfare, through the creation of the *guna*s. [6] He thinks about it. Surrounded by all the sacred texts and his own followers, he descended from his own residence. As he travelled through the firmament, along the path, he was praised by the leaders of the immortals, on their col-

lection of *vimana*s. [7] Along the path, there were groups of Siddhas, [8] *gandharva*s, [9] Sadhyas, [10] *charana*s [11] and large numbers of sages who worshipped him. He approached, illuminating the valley of Gandhamadana. Because of the vehicle drawn by the swan, the divine rishi recognized his father, the illustrious Hiranyagarbha. [12] He quickly arose and offered him objects of worship. The father and son also joined their hands in salutation and worshipped him. [13] O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The illustrious one was an aggregate of qualities and was always victorious. Because of this and because of his descent, the original being was worshipped with those objects and highly praised through hymns and words. He smiled benevolently and spoke to Priyavrata.

'The illustrious one said, "O son! Listen to the true words I am speaking. The god [14] is incomprehensible and you should not find fault with him. We, Bhava, this *maharshi*—all of us are incapable and only carry out his commands. No embodied being can use austerities, learning, yoga, valour, intelligence, *dharma*, or the power of himself or someone else, to counter what has been decreed by him. O dear one! Accept that the birth, death, deeds, the act of doing, grief, confusion, constant fear, happiness, unhappiness and association with the body of all living beings are the result of the commands of the one who is not manifest. His words are like a rope and the gunas and action are like strings that all of us are tied firmly to. O child! They cannot be severed. All of us are like offerings to the illustrious one. We are like quadrupeds, tethered to the nose for the sake of bipeds. O dear one! We are indeed bound to whatever is given to us by the lord, happiness, unhappiness and the attachment to gunas and action. We are tied to whatever existence the protector engages us in. We are like blind people, being led by a person who has eyes. Even a liberated person has to bear his body, until the store of his deeds has been exhausted, but without identifying himself with the body. This is like a person who wakes up and remembers what he experienced in dreams. However, in the next body, he should not enjoy material objects. Even if he goes to the forest, he may have six enemies [15] who will cause fear and distraction. But a learned person will have conquered his senses and will be satisfied within himself. No one can harm such a person,

even if he happens to be in the householder stage. He must seek to conquer the six enemies and first enter the householder stage. This is like conquering the enemies in an extremely well-fortified place. When the desires have been exhausted, as a learned person, he can go elsewhere. [16] But you have already fortified yourself well and have conquered the six enemies, since you have sought refuge at the lotus feet of the one who has a lotus in his navel. Since the supreme being has commanded you, enjoy the objects of pleasure. Free of attachment, serve your own nature."'

Shri-Shuka said, 'The great devotee of the illustrious one was thus instructed by the illustrious preceptor of the three worlds. Since he was himself inferior, he bowed his head down and accepted the command given to him. With a great deal of respect, he agreed and carried out those instructions. Manu worshipped the illustrious one with whatever objects of worship he could muster up, while Priyavrata and Narada looked on calmly. He [17] then returned to where he had come from, his own supreme world, beyond the capacity of thoughts and words to grasp. Because of the supreme one, Manu accomplished his desire. With the permission of the divine rishi, he instated his son as the protector of the entire world. He was thus himself relieved from association with material objects. This store of senses is like a waterbody where the water is mixed with poison. In this way, through the wishes of the lord, he became the lord of the world and was engaged in all the acts he had the right to perform. The illustrious one, the original being, is supreme in his powers and can destroy the bondage of the entire universe. By meditating on his feet, he destroyed all the impurities in his heart. He ruled over the earth and enhanced the reverence towards the great one. He married the daughter of Prajapati Vishvakarma, named Barhismati. Through her, he obtained ten sons who were his equals in good conduct, qualities, deeds, beauty, valour and generosity. As the youngest, he also had a daughter, and her name was Urjasvati. All of them were named after Agni—Agnidhra, Idhmajihva, Yajnabahu, Mahavira, Hiranyareta, Ghritaprishtha, Savana, Medhatithi, Vitihotra and Kavi. Out of these, three held up their seed —Kavi, Mahavira and Savana. From their infancy, they pursued realization of the atman. They were familiar with, and achieved, the status of becoming

a paramahamsa. They were supreme rishis who renounced. They sought refuge at the beautiful lotus feet of the illustrious one, Vasudeva, who resides in all embodied forms and who is the recourse for those who are scared. They remembered the supreme one and without any contamination, followed *bhakti yoga*. [18] Thus purifying their hearts, they perceived the illustrious one, who is in the atmans of all beings. Free from all differences, they realized the *paramatman* [19] in their own *jivatman*s. [20] Through another wife, he [21] had three sons—Uttama, Tapasa and Raivata. Each became the lord of a *manvantara*. [22] While his sons were engaged in self-control, [23] the lord of the earth uninterruptedly ruled over the earth for eleven *arbuda*s. [24] The entire earth was subdued by the loud twang of his bowstring, when it was drawn by those two powerful and well-endowed arms. The proponents of *adharma* were defeated. Every day, he found increasing pleasure with Barhismati. Her gentle femine behaviour, bashfulness, delicate smiles and beautiful sidelong glances conquered his sense of discrimination. The great-minded person enjoyed himself like one who was ignorant. When the illustrious sun god circles around the mountain of the gods, [25] he illuminates half of the earth, while the other half is enveloped in darkness. He [26] did not like this. Because he had worshipped and satisfied the illustrious one, he had obtained superhuman powers. Using a radiant chariot that was like the sun's chariot in speed, he decided to turn night into day and like a second sun, followed the sun's orbit seven times. The trails of his chariot left impressions that became the seven oceans and these divided the earth into seven *dvipa*s known as Jambu, Plaksha, Shalmali, Kusha, Krouncha, Shaka and Pushkara. [27] Each is twice as large as the one that precedes it. On the outside, each is surrounded by a body of liquid. The seven liquid bodies are made out of salt water, sugar cane juice, liquor, clarified butter, milk, curds and fresh water. [28] They form boundaries around the seven dvipas. Progressively, each is equal in size to the dvipa it surrounds. Barhismati's husband made each of his dutiful sons, Agnidhra, Idhmajihva, Yajnabahu, Hiranyareta, Ghritaprishtha, Medhatithi and Vitihotra, [29] the lord of one of these dvipas. He bestowed his daughter, named Urjasvati, on Ushanas. [30] Through her, Kavya had a daughter named Devayani. This kind of wonderful manli-

ness is only possible for a man who seeks the dust of Urukrama's [31] feet and conquers the six attributes. [32] Even if an inferior person performs the good deed of uttering the illustrious one's name, he shakes off bondage. Thus, he was unlimited in his strength and valour. Despite having been instructed at the feet of the divine rishi, he succumbed to the attachment with the gunas. Once, he became dissatisfied and wanted to withdraw. Since he knew about the atman, he said, "Alas! I have been engaged in an act of wickedness. I have been immersed in the senses and in ignorance. By being submerged in this pit of material objects, I have caused hardships for myself. Enough of these trifles. I am like a domesticated animal in the hands of a woman. Shame on me. I am condemned because of this." Through the favours of the supreme being, he obtained self-realization. He divided the earth equally among his obedient sons. He gave up his great prosperity. He had pleasured with his queen, but abandoned her, like a dead body. With renunciation in his heart, he again followed the path indicated by Narada, of devotedly following the pastimes of the illustrious Hari. There is a *shloka* about him. "But for the lord, who could have performed Priyavrata's deeds? He destroyed the darkness and with his axle, created the seven oceans. To stop conflict among beings, he divided the earth into separate dvipas and created boundaries with oceans, mountains and forests. He loved those who were devoted to the supreme being. He regarded the greatness a man obtains through his deeds, on earth and in heaven, as equal to being in hell."'

Chapter 5(2)

Shri-Shuka said, 'When his father was thus engaged, Agnidhra followed his instruction. He ruled over the subjects who resided in Jambudvipa, protecting them and looking upon them as his own sons. Once, he desired to obtain the world of the ancestors. [33] He went to the valley in the mountain [34] that celestial women sport in. He collected all the required objects and with single-minded attention, worshipped the illustrious lord and creator of the universe. [35] He performed austerities. The illustrious and original being dis-

cerned his intentions. There was an *apsara* named Purvachitti who was singing in his assembly. He sent her down to him. She went to an extremely beautiful grove in the hermitage. It was dense with many kinds of trees, with thick branches and golden creepers, vibrating because couples of land birds were perched there, singing in melodious tones. There were waterbodies filled with sparkling water, lotuses and *karandava*s, swans and many other aquatic birds which called out in response. She wandered around there. As she walked in that graceful and enticing way, her anklets tinkled. The prince's eyes, which were like a pair of lotus buds, were closed in the yoga of meditation. Hearing the pleasing and tinkling sounds from the ornaments on her feet, he opened his eyes slightly and looked at her. Not very far from him, she was inhaling the fragrance of the beautiful flowers, like a bee. Her glances brought delight to the minds of gods and men. Her gait, playfulness, bashfulness, modest glances, sweet voice and limbs delighted the minds of men. Her mouth was like an opening for the one who has flowers as his weapon. [36] Her mouth seemed to ooze out flows of *amrita*. Her smiles and speech were intoxicating. Swarms of bees, blind with intoxication, surrounded her. As she walked swiftly, her breasts, which were like pots, quivered. The burden of her hair hung down, up to the girdle. She was like a goddess and he looked at her. Seizing the opportunity, the illustrious Makaradhvaja brought him under his subjugation. Like a senseless person, [37] he spoke to her. "O noble sage! Who are you and what do you want to do on this mountain? Are you a *maya* of the supreme divinity, the illustrious one? O friend! Are you wielding these two stringless bows [38] for your own sake? In this desolate spot, which unwary animal do you wish to hunt? O glorious one! Your arrows are like the petals of lotuses. [39] They are gentle and without tufts, but are extremely pointed at the tips. In this forest, we do not know whom you desire to aim these at? May your valour be for the benefit of foolish people like us. O glorious one! Your disciples are around you, [40] reading and singing Sama hymns with their mysteries, as they glorify their lord. Flowers are falling down from the braids in your hair and all the large number of rishis are worshipping and seeking them, as if they are the branches of the Vedas. O brahmana! The tinkling of the bells on your feet

are like the calls of *tittira* birds. [41] Though their forms cannot be seen, we can hear them. The girdle encircling your well-rounded hips is as beautiful as a *kadamba* flower, surrounded by a circle of flames. Where did you get this bark? O brahmana! What is inside these two beautiful mounds? [42] Though you are slender at the waist, you are carrying them and my eyes have been attracted to them. These mounds of yours are pinkish-red and their fragrance has permeated my hermitage. O extremely fortunate one! You have perfumed it. O best among friends! Show me the region where people are born with such beautiful limbs on their chest. You are agitating the minds of people like us. From your sweet words, gestures and the nectar in your mouth, those born there must possess many wonders. What do you eat to sustain yourself? O dear one! A fragrance, like that of oblations, is emanating from it. [43] Since you do not blink, you are Vishnu's portion. There are two makaras in your ears. [44] Your eyes are like a couple of restless fish. Your teeth are as beautiful as an array of birds. [45] Your face is like a pond and swarms of bees are buzzing around you. You are playing with a ball in your hand and your palm is like a lotus. As I follow its movement in different directions, my eyes have become agitated. You are not aware that the mass of your curly and matted hair is hanging loose. Like a lascivious person, the wind is trying to steal your lower garment. O store of austerities! Where did you get this form? It destroys the austerities of those who are trying to perform austerities? So as to obtain this, what kind of austerities did you perform? O friend! You should perform austerities in my company. Is the creator of the universe pleased with me? [46] O beloved brahmana! You have been given to me by the gods and I will not let go of you. My mind and my sight will not let you go. O one with the beautiful mounds! Take me with you, as a follower, wherever you wish and these auspicious friends of yours can also follow." He was accomplished in entreating women and was skilled in carnal pleasures. With an intelligence like that of the gods, he used such words to make the celestial lady become attached to him. Because of his intelligence, good conduct, beauty, age, prosperity and generosity, her mind was attracted to the lord of hordes of heroes. She spent ten thousand human years with the lord of Jambudvipa,

enjoying heavenly pleasures. It is said that Agnidhra, supreme among kings, obtained nine sons through her—Nabhi, Kimpurusha, Harivarsha, Ilavrita, Ramyaka, Hiranmaya, Kuru, Bhadrashva and Ketumala. She gave birth to these sons, one son a year. After this, leaving her home, Purvachitti again presented herself before the god Aja. Through the favours of their mother, Agnidhra's sons naturally obtained well-formed bodies and strength. They were just like their father and he divided up the divisions [47] of Jambudvipa for them to enjoy. King Agnidhra's desires were still not satiated and, day and night, he remembered the apsara. Therefore, following the rites of the sacred texts, after death, he obtained the same world as her. This is the world that the ancestors enjoy. When their father died, the nine brothers married Meru's nine daughters, known as, Merudevi, Pratirupa, Ugradamshtri, Lata, Ramya, Shyama, Nari, Bhadra and Devaviti.'

Chapter 5(3)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Merudevi did not have any sons and Nabhi wished to have offspring. Therefore, controlling themselves, they worshipped the illustrious lord of sacrifices. It is impossible to obtain the illustrious one through performing different types of rites, objects appropriate to the time and the place, *mantra*s, rituals, *dakshina* [48] and the invocation of many kinds of ordinances. However, he is affectionate towards his devotees and is pleased through pure words and faith. He manifests himself in his beautiful and unvanquished form to those who are his own and who worship him in the proper way, accepting him in their hearts. His beautiful form and limbs are a delight to the heart, mind and eyes and reveal themselves. Thus it was. He was radiant in his two-armed form. The supreme being was clad in a yellow silken garment. The *shrivatsa* mark was on his chest. He had a conch shell, a lotus, a garland of wild flowers, a *chakra*, the immortal jewel, [49] a mace and other objects. His dazzling and excellent diadem, earrings, girdle, necklace, armlets, anklets and other ornaments decorated his body. On seeing him, the officiating priests, the assistant priests and the lord of

the house [50] were like poor people when they obtain a lot of riches. With a great deal of respect, they bowed their heads down and worshipped him with all the requisite objects.

'The officiating priests said, "O most exalted among those who are worshipped! We are your servants. We are repeatedly bowing down before you. On your own, please accept our worship. Since you are incomprehensible, we cannot worship you. However, we have been instructed by virtuous ones. Which man, immersed in the transformations of the gunas of Prakriti, is capable of describing the lord who is beyond Purusha and Prakriti? The names, forms and qualities of the material world cannot determine your form. You are most auspicious and supreme in all the qualities. Even if one of your parts is worshipped, you destroy all the sins of people. Devotedly, your servants are worshipping you with faltering words, prayers, water, branches with new shoots, *tulasi* leaves and freshly sprouted *durva* grass. O supreme one! This should indeed satisfy you. We have worshipped you properly with many objects, without hoping to get anything in return. Your self is certainly the source of all the *purushartha*s. [51] They directly flow from you, continuous, uninterrupted and increasing. O protector! All this is only for the sake of obtaining your benedictions. [52] You should be pleased with our worship. O supreme among all supreme beings! We are supremely ignorant. We are foolish and do not know what is best for us. You are boundless in compassion. We have not worshipped you properly. However, because of your own greatness, you have sought to confer liberation on us and have revealed yourself to us, like an ordinary person. O supreme among those who should be worshipped and supreme among those who confer boons! At the sacrifice of the royal sage, you have shown yourself to your own devotees. This sight of you is itself a boon. O accumulation of qualities! There are sages whose non-attachment has increased. They have burnt down all their impurities through the fire of knowledge. Content in their own atmans, they have attained your state. They continuously chant about your qualities and even for them, this represents supreme bliss. Your qualities, deeds and names can destroy all sins. May we be able to utter them even when we stumble a bit, are hungry, are falling down, are yawning, are

amidst hardships, or are incapacitated because of fever or impending death, so that we can't remember them. Moreover, this royal sage desires offspring. O lord! He hopes for a son who will be exactly like you. Your blessings can yield heaven and liberation. With an offspring as the ultimate objective, he is worshipping you, like a person who approaches the lord of riches for a mere husk. Is there anyone in this world who has not been vanquished by your invincible maya, whose path cannot be determined? [53] With the intelligence confounded, one therefore succumbs to material objects, which are like poison and suffuse one's nature, even if one worships at the feet of great ones. O lord who performs many acts! You have indeed been invited here by wicked ones for a material objective. O lord of the gods! This shows disrespect towards you. We are ignorant. However, because of your amiability, please pardon everything."'

Shri-Shuka said, 'Thus the illustrious one, foremost among gods, was praised in prose [54] by those at whose feet the lord of the varsha worships. [55] Filled with kindness, he replied.

'The illustrious one said, "O rishis! I am certainly pleased and your words will not be false. He has sought a son who is exactly like me and this boon is not easy to obtain. Since I am matchless, there can be no one who is like me. However, the words of brahmanas cannot be false. After all, the lineage of brahmanas is like my mouth. Therefore, it shall be that way. Since there is no one who is my equal, my portion will descend through Agnidhra's son."'

Shri-Shuka said, 'The illustrious one said this to Merudevi's husband, while she heard, and disappeared. O Vishnudatta! [56] At the sacrifice, the supreme rishis pleased the illustrious one in this way. Wishing to do what would be agreeable to Nabhi, he descended in Merudevi. Desiring to exhibit dharma to mendicants [57] who are naked and hold up their seed, he descended in a form that was pure.'

Chapter 5(4)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Thus, he was born with all the signs of the illustrious one. He was tranquil and impartial towards everyone. He possessed great powers and wasn't attached to prosperity. Day by day, his powers increased. Ordinary people, subjects, brahmanas and gods greatly wished that he would rule over the surface of the earth. His bodily features were superior and were extolled in great shlokas. Because of his vigour, strength, beauty, fame, valour and prowess, his father gave him the name of Rishabha. [58] The illustrious Indra was envious and did not rain down in this varsha. Ascertaining this, the illustrious Rishabhadeva, the lord of yoga, laughed. Using the maya of his yoga, he showered down on his own varsha of Ajanabha. [59] As he desired, Nabhi obtained an excellent son and was filled with overwhelming jubiliation. He accepted the words of the illustrious and ancient being that he had himself accepted this form to follow the dharma of the world of men. Overcome by maya, he addressed him as "My child" and "My son". He reared him affectionately and was exceedingly happy. King Nabhi knew that the citizens of the city and the countryside and the ordinary people loved his son. To protect the ordinances, he cheerfully instated him and entrusted him to accomplished brahmanas. With Merudevi, he went to Vishala and engaged in meditation. He worshipped the illustrious Vasudeva, known as Nara and Narayana. In the course of time, he attained his [60] greatness. O Pandaveya! Two shlokas are cited about him. "Which man can undertake the deeds of the royal sage, Nabhi? Because of his pure deeds, he obtained Hari as his son." "Who can be more devoted to brahmanas than Nabhi? Worshipped in auspicious ways, the brahmanas used their energies and the lord of sacrifices showed himself at his sacrifice." The illustrious Rishabhadeva regarded his varsha as a place where he would undertake action. For instance, he resided in his preceptor's house. He then obtained the permission of the preceptors to become a householder and gave them gifts. [61] Seeking to instruct about dharma by following it, he obtained Jayanti from Indra [62] and married her. He performed both types of deeds mentioned in the sacred texts. [63] Through her, he had one hundred sons who were exactly like him. Among them, the eldest was the great *yogi*,

Bharata. He was best in qualities. It is after him that this region came to be known as Bharatavarsha. Among the other ninety-nine, the foremost were Kushavarta, Ilavarta, Brahmavarta, Malaya, Ketu, Bhadrasena, Indrasprik, Vidarbha and Kikata. There were also Kavi, Havi, Antariksha, Prabuddha, Pippalayana, Avirhotra, Drumila, Chamasa and Karabhajana. These nine immensely fortunate ones were excellent in conduct and exhibited the dharma of following the illustrious one. Their greatness was enhanced by the illustrious one. I will describe this to you when I recount the conversation between Vasudeva and Narada. [64] The younger eighty-one of Jayanti's sons followed the instructions of their father. They were great in conduct and extremely learned. They were brahmanas who performed sacrifices, pure in their deeds. The illustrious one, known as Rishabha, was in control of his own self. He was always free from the progression of undesired objects. He only felt absolute bliss. Though he was like the lord himself, he acted in a contrary way. [65] He followed and taught about the dharma that had become neglected over time. He was impartial, tranquil, friendly and compassionate. For the sake of dharma, artha, fame, joy and immortality of subjects who were in the householder stage in this world, he laid down rules. Whatever is undertaken by the best is followed by the world. [66] He himself knew everything about the secret dharma of the brahman. [67] However, he followed the path shown by brahmanas and ruled over the people in accordance with *sama* and other modes. [68] As instructed, he performed one hundred sacrifices faithfully and worshipped, with all the objects appropriate to the time and the place. The officiating priests were young and appropriate to the place. When the illustrious one ruled over this varsha, there was no man who desired something for himself that did not exist. [69] No one desired anything from anyone else. No one ever glanced at anything that belonged to the master. They found increasing affection within their own inner selves. While roaming around, the illustrious Rishabha once went to Brahmavarta. There was an assembly of the foremost among brahmana rishis there. His sons were well controlled, devoted and affectionate. However, he wished to instruct them. While the subjects heard, he spoke to them.'

Chapter 5(5)

'Rishabha said, "O sons! Among those who bear bodies in this world, a person with a human body does not deserve to suffer hardships that result from desire, unlike those who survive on excrement. [70] He should serve the divine truth through austerities and by purifying himself, obtain infinite association with the brahman. It is said that serving the great is the gate to liberation. Associating with those who are attached to women is the gate to darkness. The great are impartial in their intelligence and tranquil. They are without anger, fraternal and virtuous. There are those who think of me as the lord and think that affection towards me is the greatest objective. They are not happy with those who are obsessed with maintaining their bodies. They are not attached to homes, wives and sons and only want what is required to subsist in this world. When one engages in gratification of the senses, one is certainly distracted and performs contrary acts. I do not think it good that one should perform deeds [71] that make one undergo hardships in a new body. As long as one does not inquire the truth about the atman, there is ignorance and one remains vanquished. As long as one engages in tasks, the mind is also absorbed in deeds and binds down the body. In this way, as long as the mind succumbs to action, one is united with ignorance and the atman remains shrouded. Until one develops affection towards me, Vasudeva, a person is not freed from the identity with the body. Until one realizes that the qualities of this world are meaningless, one is selfish and distracted and does not quickly become learned. Such a person loses his memory and faces hardships. He is ignorant and obtains a home where he indulges in sexual intercourse. The man and the woman are attracted to sexual intercourse and it is said that this binds their hearts to each other. Thereafter, people are deluded by the home, the wife, sons and riches and notions of 'I' and 'mine'. There is a firm bondage to deeds. [72] When these are loosened and the bonds of the mind and the heart weaken, people retreat from this. [73] They give up the cause [74] and proceed towards supreme liberation. I am Hamsa. [75] I am the preceptor. I must be devotedly followed. There must be

detachment and tolerance for the opposites. There must be realization that beings face hardships everywhere. There must be inquiry and austerities and withdrawal from the objects of this world. Actions must be for me. There must be constant recital of my accounts. There must be association with my devotees. My qualities must be chanted. O sons! There must be lack of enmity, impartiality and self-restraint. There must be a desire to give up the body, the home and the identification with the self. By resorting to a secluded place, the yoga of *adhyatma* [76] must be pursued. The breath of life, the senses and the mind must be completely controlled. One must always observe *brahmacharya* [77] faithfully. Through *yama*, [78] speech must not be allowed to be confused. Through discrimination, one must always think of me. One will then be illuminated with *jnana* and *vijnana*. [79] Through yoga, there will be perseverance and enterprise. Through this truth, one can give up the *linga sharira* [80] and the limitation known as ahamkara. [81] The desire for action is brought about ignorance. If one is not distracted, through this yoga and by following the instructions, one can sever the bondage in the heart. For further progress, one should tend to give up this yoga. [82] Free of anger, [83] a king or a preceptor who desires my world or seeks my favours as an objective, should instruct the ignorant disciples about this. Those foolish ones are deluded by *karma* and he should not urge them to undertake further karma. What benefit will a man derive from this? Bereft of insight, he will fall down into a pit. [84] A person in this world is bereft of insight and does not know what is for his own good. He wishes for material objects and wishes to satisfy the senses. For the sake of a trifling bit of happiness, they injure each other. The foolish person does not know about the infinite unhappiness that will follow. If an evil-minded and ignorant person exists in this way and a compassionate, experienced and learned person sees this, why will he not direct him to the right path, like directing a blind man? If one does not deliver from this cycle of birth and death, one should not become a preceptor, a relative, a father, a mother, a divinity or a husband. This body of mine is inconceivable. My heart only has sattva and dharma. I have left adharma behind me, far away. That is the reason noble ones know me as Rishabha. All of you have been born from my heart. Therefore, with

unadulterated intelligence, you should serve your great brother, Bharata. That service will be service to the subjects. Among living beings, plants are superior. Reptiles, which have developed intelligence, are superior to them. Humans are superior to them and *pramatha*s [85] are superior to humans. In turn, gandharvas and Siddhas are superior to them and the followers of the gods are superior to these too. The gods and the *asura*s, with Maghavan as the foremost, are superior to them. Daksha and the other sons of Brahma are superior to them. Since Bhava resulted from Virinchi's seed, he is regarded as inferior to Virinchi. But I am superior to him. [86] I, the god, regard brahmanas as my god. O brahmanas! I do not see any beings who are equal to brahmanas, not to speak of being superior to them. I do not desire and accept the oblations of *agnihotra* sacrifices as much as I do what men faithfully offer to them. It is they who have nurtured my unadulterated and ancient body, which consists of supreme and sacred truth. [87] They possess control of the mind, control of the senses, truth, mercy, austerities, tolerance and realization. I am infinite in my powers and I am superior to the one who is the greatest. There is nothing I cannot bestow, heaven and emancipation, not to speak of anything else. They serve me faithfully and desire nothing from anyone else. O sons! I reside in all beings, mobile and immobile. Hence, they must be respected by you at every step. Since your insight is clear, know that this is like offering worship to me. Thoughts, words, deeds and everything that is undertaken in this world is directly my service. Without realizing this, a man cannot desire to free himself from the noose of death and this great delusion."'

Shri-Shuka said, 'In this way, the great being and great benefactor, known as the illustrious Rishabha, himself instructed his sons. Though they were learned, he wished to instruct the worlds. This was the virtuous path for those who withdraw from material objects and those who withdraw from deeds. These are the great sages, the paramahamsas, who are characterized by devotion, knowledge and non-attachment. He instructed his one hundred sons, the eldest of whom, Bharata, was devoted to the illustrious one and to devotees of the illustrious one. To protect the earth, he himself instated him. After this, though he remained at home, he renounced every-

thing, except his body. The sky was his garment and his hair was dishevelled. He was like a person who was mad. He instated the *ahavaniya* fire [88] within himself and left Brahmavarta, to travel around. His form was like that of an *avadhuta*, [89] like one who was stupid, blind, dumb, deaf, mad, or a *pishacha*. [90] Though people addressed him by such names, he adopted a vow of silence. Here and there, as he passed through cities, villages, mines, fields, gardens, habitations in valleys, camps, cow pens, settlements of cowherds, resting places, mountains, forests, hermitages and so on, the worst of society surrounded him, like a wild elephant surrounded by flies. They threatened him, beat him, urinated on him, spat on him, threw stones at him, hurled dust and foul odours at him and abused him. He ignored these, since the physical body might be called real, but was actually unreal. In his own greatness, he comprehended them both [91] and no longer accepted notions of "I" and "mine". Undisturbed in his mind, he travelled around the world, alone. His hands, feet and chest were extremely delicate. His arms were long. His shoulders, neck, face and other limbs were well-formed. He was naturally beautiful, with a smiling and handsome face. His large eyes were beautiful, like the petals of a lotus that had just bloomed. The pupils seemed to take away all miseries. The forehead, ears, neck and nose were extremely beautiful, the face rendered charming by his deep smile. An abundance of curly, matted and tawny hair was spread around. He appeared like a great festival and stirred the god of love in the minds of the women who resided in the cities. Since his body was as dirty as that of an avadhuta, he seemed to be possessed by an evil planet. When the illustrious one saw that people in general were against this practice of yoga, he perceived that there was no point in directly opposing this resistance. He accepted the terrible vow observed by a python. He ate, drank, chewed and passed urine and excrement while he was lying down. Thus, his body was defiled with urine and excrement. But the smell of the excrement was overshadowed by a fragrance that the wind brought and this excellent fragrance spread in every direction, up to a distance of ten *yojana*s. [92] Thus, whether he was moving, standing, sitting or lying down, he followed the behaviour of cattle, deer and crows. He drank, ate and passed urine like crows, deer and cattle.

In this way, the illustrious one performed many forms of yoga. Rishabha was a master of *kaivalya*. [93] Immersed in the great and supreme one, he found constant bliss. The illustrious Vasudeva is manifested in all beings and he saw no difference between him and his own atman. Through the practice of yoga, he accomplished all the *siddhi*s—travelling through the sky, travelling at the speed of thought, the ability to disappear, the ability to enter another person's body, the ability to see things that are far away and other such powers. [94] O king! However, though he automatically achieved these powers, his mind did not welcome them.' [95]

Chapter 5(6)

The king said, 'O illustrious one! Those who find delight in their own selves and obtain knowledge fanned by yoga, certainly burn down the seeds of karma. The powers that automatically arise should not lead to distress.' [96]

The rishi [97] replied, 'What you have said is true. But there are some in this world who do not trust the fickle mind, like a cunning hunter. [98] In this connection, it has been said, "The mind is fickle and one should never contract a friendship with it. Lords have performed austerities over a long period of time and those have become dislodged. [99] Desire and other enemies always follow, looking for an opening. If a yogi creates friendship, [100] he offers entry, like the unchaste wife of a husband. It is the root cause of desire, anger, pride, avarice, grief, confusion, fear and other things. Which learned person will accept this bondage of karma?" He was the ornament of all the guardians of the world. But because of the garb, speech and conduct of a foolish avadhuta, he was not noticed. The powers of the illustrious one went unnoticed. He wished to instruct yogis about the technique for giving up his own body. He wished to surrender himself, free from the flow of desires and undesirable ends. Considering this, he gave up the identification with the linga sharira. The illustrious Rishabha was freed from his linga sharira. Nevertheless, because of the maya of yoga, the physical body still roamed around the world and went to Konka, Venka, Kutaka and southern

Karnataka. [101] He did not desire to travel to these regions. However, he reached a grove near Kutakachala. He held a piece of stone in his mouth and was like a mad man. His hair was dishevelled and he was naked. He wandered around in this form. Thereafter, the friction of bamboos rubbing against each other ignited a fire. Fanned by the wind, this forest conflagration, burnt down the forest and his body. In Konka, Venka and Kutaka, there will be a king by the name of Arhat. He will get to know about what he [102] had practised and taught. Because of the adharma of *kali yuga*, he will give up his own dharma, which dispels fear. Instead, using his own intelligence, the evil person will propagate the perverse path of a heretic. Because of this, in kali yuga, wicked people will be confounded by divine maya. They will be devoid of purity and character and abandon their own ordinances and rules. Because of kali yuga, they will not bathe or perform ablutions. They will be unclean and will pluck out their hair. With adharma pervading, their intelligence will be destroyed. They will generally condemn the brahman, brahmanas, sacrifices, the supreme being and the world. People will think of their own principles of conduct and deviate. There will be progressive encouragement of blind people. They will themselves descend into the darkness of ignorance. This descent was to instruct those who are full of rajas about kaivalya. A shloka is chanted about his qualities. "This earth has seven oceans and dvipas and this varsha [103] is the most sacred. People there sing about Murari and about the auspicious deeds his incarnations undertake. This lineage of Priyavrata is famous. The ancient being, the original Purusha, descended there. He propagated the dharma that frees from undesired karma. Even in his mind, is there any other yogi who can follow the example set by the unborn one? They desire the powers that the maya of yoga brings. Though he didn't make efforts, they manifested themselves and he spurned them." The illustrious one, known as Rishabha, was the supreme preceptor of all the Vedas, the worlds, the divinities, the brahmanas and cattle. His activities were pure and reciting them cleanses all the wicked conduct of men. The great one is the supremely auspicious refuge. If a man listens to it with increasing attentiveness and devotion, or speaks about it to others, single-minded devotion towards the illustrious Vasudeva

is developed in both. [104] In *samsara*, [105] one constantly faces many kinds of sins and is incessantly tormented by sufferings. The wise bathe themselves in supreme *nivritti* [106] and seek liberation. However, though this is the greatest purushartha, it is not automatically obtained, even if one strives for it. But through devotion to the illustrious one, one transcends all these objectives. O king! He is the master and preceptor of all of you [107] and the Yadus. The divinity loves you and is the master of your lineage. Indeed, he sometimes acted like your servant. O dear one! The illustrious Mukunda grants liberation to those who worship him, but rarely does he offer an opportunity to serve through bhakti yoga. He was always conscious of who he was. He was complete in himself and had no other desires. He wished to ensure benefit for people whose intelligence has been dormant for a long time. Because of his compassion, he wished to show people about the atman and grant them freedom from fear. He is known as the illustrious Rishabha. Let us bow down to him.'

Chapter 5(7)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Bharata was immensely devoted to the illustrious one and was instated by the illustrious one [108] to rule over the earth. He ruled and married Panchajani, Vishvarupa's daughter. Just as the five subtle elements give rise to the gross elements, [109] through her, he had five sons who were exactly like him—Sumati, Rashtrabhrita, Sudarshana, Avarana and Dhumraketu. This varsha was earlier known as Ajanabha, but came to be known as Bharata after him. The lord of the earth was great in learning. Like his father and grandfather, he was affectionate towards the subjects, who were engaged in their own tasks. He followed his own dharma and protected them. He worshipped the illustrious one, who is the form of *yajna*s and *kratu*s. [110] He faithfully performed many kinds of large and small kratus—agnihotra, *darsha*, *purnamasa*, *chaturmasya*, those performed with animals and those with soma. Through the four kinds of officiating priests he observed all the rituals, complete and partial. When these

many kinds of sacrifices were commenced, with all the attendant rites and rituals, the *apurva* [111] fruits of the sacrifice, known as dharma, were offered to the supreme brahman, the lord of sacrifices. His signs are manifest in all the gods. He is the object of all the mantras. He is the supervisor of all the objectives, the rules and the tasks. He is himself the doer. He is the origin of all the gods. He was the illustrious Vasudeva. He [112] was accomplished in cleansing himself of all anger and sin and thought in this way, with the oblations offered by the *adhvaryu*s [113] accepted as their shares by gods who were limbs of the supreme being. This is what the performer of the sacrifice thought. He purified his heart through such pure deeds. Day by day, greater devotion developed in him for the brahman. The great being, the illustrious Vasudeva, manifested himself in the inner recesses of his heart, with the signs of shrivatsa, Koustubha, a garland of wild flowers, a conch shell, a mace and the other signs. He is like a being who is etched in the hearts of his own people and the radiant form of the being showed itself in this form. He was thus engaged for ten million years and enjoyed himself. He understood that the time had come for his deeds to be extinguished. He divided up the kingdom of his father and grandfathers among his own sons. According to the rules of inheritance, he himself divided up all his possessions. He then left his own residence and went to Pulaha's hermitage. It is said that there, Hari shows his affection towards his own devotees and displays himself in the forms that they desire. The river known as Chakranadi, supreme among rivers, [114] sanctifies everything in that hermitage, and leaves marks like a navel, seen above and below every stone. It is said that alone in a grove in Pulaha's hermitage, he worshipped the illustrious one with many kinds of flowers, tender leaves, tulasi, water, roots, bulbs and fruits. Thus purified, he no longer had any desire for the objects of the senses. He was tranquil and obtained supreme bliss. Through such constant worship of the illustrious Purusha, his attachment increased and the burdens of his heart were loosened and melted away. The force of delight in his body made his body hair stand up. The intense longing led to tears of love flowing from his eyes and obstructing his vision. He meditated on the illustrious one's lotus feet, loved by him. Through this bhakti yoga, he was overwhelmed with

supreme bliss everywhere and this inundated the deep lake in his heart. His intelligence was submerged in this and he no longer remembered the rites of worshipping the illustrious one. He was thus firm in his vow to the illustrious one. He was attired in deerskin. The mass of curly, tawny and matted hair was wet because of bathing thrice a day and was beautiful. Through hymns dedicated to the sun god, he worshipped the illustrious being, whose golden form is manifested in the solar disc when it rises. He worshipped him and said, "Knowledge results from the sun god, who is beyond rajas. Everything was created by meditating on the self-radiant one. Having created it from his seed, he enters it and maintains it, protecting beings who hanker after material objects. I worship the bestower of intelligence."' [115]

Chapter 5(8)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Once, after having performed his ablutions, he bathed in the great river and performed the general and specific rituals. He then seated himself on the banks of the river for three *muhurta*s [116] and chanted the syllable *Oum*. O king! At that time, a thirsty doe arrived near the water. While it was drinking water, from not very far away, a lord of deer [117] roared and this was terrifying to all the worlds. The doe was naturally timid. On hearing the sound made by the lion, fear entered and agitated its heart. Its eyes darted around, here and there. Though its thirst had not been satisfied, because of its fear, it leapt across the river. It was expecting and while it leapt in fear, it miscarried and the fawn was dislodged from its womb into the flow of the river. Because of the miscarriage, jumping across the river, fear, exhaustion and affliction, and because it was separated from the herd, the black antelope fell into a cave and died. Bharata, the royal sage, saw the helpless and innocent fawn being borne along by the current. Compassionately behaving like a friend, he picked it up and brought the motherless fawn back to his hermitage. It is said that he developed great affection for this fawn, treating it like his own child. Every day, he nurtured it, protected it, reared it and petted it. Because of this attachment, within a few days, he

forgot about his own rituals, yama and even the worship of the supreme being. As days passed, all these suffered and were destroyed. He said, "Alas! Because of the force with which the lord's chariot revolves, [118] this helpless fawn has been separated from its kin, well-wishers and friends. It has resorted to me as a refuge and looks upon me as a mother, a father, a brother, a kin and a member of the herd. It does not have anyone else and does not know anyone else. It depends excessively on me. I know what must be done towards someone who seeks refuge and I know about the sin of neglecting it. I must nurture it, protect it, rear it and pet it." In this way, even if they have renounced, noble and virtuous ones feel affection and compassion and ignore their own selfish interests, even if they are more important. Having become attached, he lay down with it, walked with it, ate with it and so on. His heart was bound to the fawn in affection. When he entered the forest in search of *kusha* grass, flowers, kindling, leaves, fruits and roots, he was scared and worried lest wolves, jackals and wild dogs harm the fawn. Along the way, the childish fawn would dart around here and there. Since his heart was excessively burdened with love and affection, out of compassion, he would then carry it on his shoulders. [119] He placed it on his lap or on his chest. Fondling it in this way, he found great joy. Even when he was engaged in performing the rituals, he would repeatedly get up in between, to take a look at it. Thus reassured, the lord of the varsha would pronounce his benediction. "O child! May you be fortunate in every way." At other times, he felt extremely anxious, like a miser who has lost his riches. He would be filled with pity and great anxiety at the prospect of being separated from the fawn. His heart would be agitated and tormented and he would constantly grieve about this. Because of this great illusion, he would say, "Alas! This fawn, the son of a dead doe, is pitiable. I am ignoble and deceitful, like a hunter. I have not done any good deeds. It has trusted me, taking me to be like its own self. Without thinking about this, will it behave like a good being and return to me? [120] Protected by the god, will I see it safely roam around, grazing on the soft grass in the grove of the hermitage? I hope it is not devoured by a wolf, a jackal or a wild dog, by an animal that travels alone or in a herd. The illustrious one [121] arises for the welfare of the

worlds. It represents the three Vedas and is about to set now. But the deer has still not returned. I have not performed any good deeds. Will the son of the king of deer return and bring me happiness? Will it undertake the many beautiful and charming frolicking that fawns indulge in and drive away the unhappiness of its kin? With my eyes closed, I would pretend to meditate. On seeing this, it would falteringly come forward, love mixed with anger. Like a gentle drop of water, it would nudge my body with the tips of its horns. When I placed oblations on kusha grass, it would pollute it. Scolded by me, extremely scared, it would stop its playing and sit down, like the son of a rishi who has conquered his senses. What austerities have I performed? This earth has performed more austerities. The son of the black antelope is small, fortunate, most auspicious and soft and its hoof prints can be seen on the ground. I am miserable, like a person who has lost his wealth, and the earth shows me how I can get that treasure back. Having ornamented herself with these marks on all sides, she indicates a spot where brahmanas who desire liberation can perform sacrifices. [122] The deer has lost its mother and is scared of the lion. The fawn has strayed away from its hermitage. Will the illustrious lord of the stars, who is compassionate towards people, take pity and protect it? I am separated from my own child. Like the flames of a forest conflagration, that is burning my heart, which is like a land lotus. The deer sought refuge with me. Out of love, the moon is showering down cool and peaceful beams on me from its mouth. They flow like amrita and are like water sprinkled on the face of someone who has fever." In this way, his heart was aggrieved with futile wishes. It was his own past deeds that appeared to him in the form of a fawn. The ascetic, who had practised yoga, deviated from the practice of yoga and the objective of worshipping the illustrious one. How else could there be attachment to a fawn, a different species? It is extremely difficult to abandon the sons born from one's own self. But because that would have been an impediment in achieving what was beneficial, he had previously given that up. However, now, the practice of yoga by the royal sage, Bharata, was obstructed by a fawn. In this way, nurturing, protecting, delighting, fondling and loving the fawn, he neglected his own atman. Finally, just as a snake dashes towards a rat's hole, the time

of death, terrible in its force, arrived. At that time, he glanced towards his side and saw the deer, grieving like his own son. With his mind fixed on it, he left this world and his body in the company of the deer. After death, he was born in the body of a deer and did not lose the memory of his past life. Even in that life, because he had worshipped the illustrious one in the past, he remembered why he had been born as a deer and was tormented by repentance. "Alas! This is a great hardship. I have fallen from the path of those who know about the atman. I gave up all attachment and was alone in an auspicious forest, seeking refuge with the atman who is in all atmans. I constantly heard, thought, chanted and worshipped the illustrious Vasudeva at all hours, completely absorbed in him. Over a period of time, my mind was completely established in him and completely fixed. But then again, I became attached to a fawn and fell down a great distance." Thus, though it was hidden, he gave up all attachment and abandoned the doe, his mother. Not attached to any material objects, he went to the illustrious one's region, loved by large numbers of virtuous sages, by the name of Shalagrama. From Kalanjara, he went to the hermitage of Pulastya and Pulaha. [123] He was extremely anxious to avoid attachment and waited for the right time. The atman was his only companion. He survived on dry leaves, grass and herbs and waited for his time as a deer to be over. Counting his days, he gave up the deer's body in the waters of the *tirtha* [124] there.'

Chapter 5(9)

Shri-Shuka said, 'There was a supreme brahmana born in the lineage of the supreme Angiras. He was in control of his mind and his senses and practised austerities. He recited and studied and possessed renunciation, contentment, tolerance, mildness, learning and lack of envy. He obtained delight from knowledge of the atman. He had nine sons who were exactly like him in qualities—learning, good conduct, behaviour, beauty and generosity. [125] Through his younger wife, he had twins. It is said that the male was Bharata, supreme among royal sages, supremely devoted to the illustri-

ous one. Having given up the body of a deer, he had obtained his last body as a brahmana. [126] He was extremely anxious about being excessively attached to his relatives. He remembered the illustrious one, who severs the bonds of karma. He heard and remembered descriptions of his qualities. In his mind, he thought about his lotus feet and through the favours of the illustrious one, remembered the successive births he had been through. Scared that there would be impediments in the path of his realizing the atman, he presented himself to people as mad, foolish, blind and deaf. However, the brahmana was tied to his son through bonds of affection. As is prescribed in the sacred texts, he performed all the *samskara*s, up to *samavartana*. [127] He also taught him the rules for cleansing, rites and rules, though he [128] did not like these. However, a father must indeed instruct his son in this way. During the months of spring and those of summer, his father continuously tried to make him learn prosody and the *savitri mantra*, with its three *pada*s, along with the *vyahriti*s, and preceded by the syllable Oum. [129] However, even in his father's presence, he acted contrary to the instructions. His [130] heart was filled with affection towards his own son. Even though the son wasn't interested, he completely taught him about cleanliness, studying, vows, rules, service towards the sacrificial fire and the preceptor, the duties of a *brahmachari* and rites. Though the son wasn't inclined to accepting this good behaviour, he instructed him himself. In this way, his wishes weren't satisified. He was attached to the householder stage and negligent. Vigilant Time took him away. The brahmana's younger wife entrusted the twins, her offspring, to her co-wife and followed her husband to the world he went to. The minds of his brothers were not submerged in supreme knowledge. They thought that knowledge of the three Vedas was everything. When their father died, they took their brother to be stupid and stopped trying to teach him anything. Ordinary people, who are nothing but animals in the form of bipeds, addressed him as mad, foolish, deaf and dumb and he replied in an appropriate way. When someone else wished that he should work, he undertook those tasks. He worked on forced labour [131] or because of wages. He begged for food, or ate whatever was given voluntarily. It could be a small quantity or a lot. It could be tasty or tasteless. He

ate only that and did not seek to gratify his senses. Since he had himself accomplished perception about the transcendental bliss and had realized his own atman, he gave up all action for the sake of fruits. He no longer identified himself with his body and was indifferent towards unhappiness and happiness and everything caused by other opposite pairs. In the winter and in the summer, in the wind and in the rain, he wandered around with a bare body, like a bull. From lying down on the bare ground, he was strong and his limbs were well formed. He did not massage his body, nor did he take a bath. Covered in dirt, the radiance of the brahman was not discernible, like a hidden gem. His loins were covered in a filthy garment and his sacred thread was dark because of the dirt. He was disrespected by persons who did not know the truth and wandered around. Though born as a brahmana, he was known as a *brahma-bandhu*. [132] When he desired food, he looked for work from others against the payment of wages and even his own brothers engaged him in agricultural tasks in the field. He did it, without knowing whether the ground was plain or uneven and whether the payment was excessive or deficient. He ate broken grains of rice, oilcakes, husks, worm-eaten grain and charred rice stuck to a pot as if all this was amrita.

'On one occasion, a lord of *vrishala*s [133] desired a son and wished to sacrifice a man who was no more than an animal to Bhadrakali. [134] Through chance, the animal intended for the sacrifice had escaped. The followers followed its footprints in the night. Everything was covered in darkness and by midnight, they were unable to find it. Suddenly, they chanced upon and saw the foremost son of the Angiras lineage. He was seated in *virasana*, [135] protecting the fields from deer, boar and other animals. They recognized that he possessed all the requisite signs and thought that he could be used for their master's task. They bound him with ropes and, with radiant faces, cheerfully brought him to Chandika's temple. The robbers [136] followed their own rituals and bathed him. They attired him in a new garment and adorned him with ornaments, pastes and garlands. He was decorated with a *tilaka* mark and fed. There were incense, lamps, garlands, parched grain, tender shoots, sprouts, fruits and other objects required for an animal sacrifice. There were loud songs and prayers. There was the sound of drums and kettledrums.

Thus prepared, they made the man-animal sit down in front of Bhadrakali. Thereafer, the king of the vrishalas and panis desired to offer the man's blood as a drink to the goddess Bhadrakali. He consecrated his sharp and extremely terrible sword with a mantra and picked it up. By nature, the vrishalas were dominated by rajas and tamas. Their minds were sprinkled with rajas and intoxication of wealth. They wished to cause injury to brave lineages born as portions of the illustrious one. They proceeded along their own wilful and perverse path, marked by violent and extremely terrible deeds. He had himself been born in a brahmana lineage, as the son of a brahmana rishi. He had no enemies. He was full of affection towards all beings. This was contrary to all codes. [137] The goddess Bhadrakali's body was scorched by the energy of the brahman, which is impossible to withstand. At the last instant, she burst forth from her image. She was filled with great rage and intolerance. Her arched eyebrows, like branches at the tips, were agitated and furrowed. Her teeth were curved. Her eyes were red at the ends. Her face was terrible. It was as if she desired to destroy the universe. Because of her rage, she emitted a loud roar of laughter. She emerged and with the same sword, severed the heads from the necks of those wicked sinners. With her companions, she drank the extremely warm blood that oozed out, as if it was liquor. She was overwhelmed and intoxicated from drinking such a lot. With her companions, she laughed out loudly. She sang and danced and played with those heads, as if they were balls. If someone commits a great transgression against a great person, he reaps all the consequences of his deeds. O Vishnudatta! This is not wonderful for paramahamsas who are devotees of the illustrious one. Even if the danger of a head being severed presents itself, they are not scared. They have severed the extremely tough bonds in their hearts and have freed themselves from their bodies. They are without enmity and are friendly towards all beings. Without any distraction and without any cessation, they are always protected by the thoughts of the illustrious one and this is a supreme weapon against all enmity. Having resorted to the feet of the illustrious one, they face no fear from anywhere.'

Chapter 5(10)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Rahugana was the king of Sindhu-Souvira. [138] Once, he was proceeding along the banks of the River Ikshumati. At that time, the leader of the palanquin bearers was looking for another man who could be a palanquin bearer. They chanced upon this excellent brahmana. He was strong and young and his limbs were well proportioned. He was capable of bearing a load, like a bull or a donkey. Such a great-minded person did not deserve to bear a palanquin. However, along with the others who had already been forcibly seized to perform this task, he was also made to do this. The excellent brahmana only walked after glancing one arrow-length ahead. [139] Therefore, he was not in tandem with the movements of the other men. Rahugana could see that his palanquin wasn't moving smoothly. He told the men who were carrying it, "O bearers! Please walk properly. Why is the vehicle moving in this uneven way?" They heard the reproachful words of their master and were scared of the fourth mode [140] being used. Hence they told him, "O lord of men! We are not inattentive and we follow your commands. We are bearing it properly. This one has just been engaged. He is not proceeding fast enough. Therefore, we are not capable of maintaining an even step with him." He realized that contamination caused by a single person was capable of polluting everyone by association. King Rahugana had served the elders. Despite this, because of what had happened, his innate nature, [141] strength and rage were kindled a little. Like a fire covered in ashes, his [142] energy of the brahman was hidden. Having ascertained the reason, his [143] mind was tainted by rajas and he said, "O brother! Alas! You are excessively exhausted. You have borne this alone, for an extremely long time. You are not stout, nor are your limbs well proportioned. O friend! You are suffering from old age, unlike these other bearers." This body is the creation of ignorance and a store of gross elements, gunas and karma and is moved by these unreal aggregates. He had no sense of "I" and "mine" and had realized the brahman. Though addressed in these sarcastic words, he was silent and continued to carry the palanquin as before. The king was en-

raged that his own palanquin continued to move in this erratic way. He said, "What is this? Are you dead? Though you are alive, you are like one who is dead. Why are you ignoring the commands of your master? You are excessively distracted. I will treat you the way the one with the staff in his hand [144] treats people. You will then come to your senses." He was admonished in many ways by the king, who prided himself because of his rajas and tamas and therefore rebuked the innumerable devotees who are loved by the illustrious one. He prided himself on his learning and his intelligence was not sharp enough to understand the behaviour of the lords of yoga.

'The brahmana had realized the brahman and was friendly towards all beings. Free of all pride, he smiled a little and spoke. The brahmana said, "What you have said is evident and is devoid of sarcasm. O brave one! Had I borne it, it would have been a burden. Had I moved towards the destination, I would have progressed along the path. Only the ignorant speak of this body as stout. [145] Stoutness, weakness, physical disease, mental pain, hunger, thirst, fear, dissension, desires, old age, sleep, gratification of the senses, anger, ego, intoxication and lamentation are meant for those born with bodies. But these do not exist in me. O king! The attribute of being dead while alive is a rule of nature. Every material object, subject to transformation, has a beginning and an end. O respected one! The relationship between you and me is not permanent. [146] These are temporary, created by destiny. We do not see the slightest bit of distinction between the two, except that created by convention. Who is the master and who is the one to be mastered? O king! However, if you still think that, tell us what we can do for you. O brave one! Despite being crazy, distracted and foolish, I have obtained and realized my real nature. That being the case, whom will you instruct? Punishing a crazy and distracted person is like grinding flour." [147] Thus, the great sage replied to everything that had been said to him. He was tranquil in conduct and did not identify with anything that was not the atman. He accepted that everything that happened to him was because of the bondage of karma. He stopped and continued to bear the king's burden. O Pandaveya! Because of his complete faith, the lord of Sindhu and Souvira had obtained the right to inquire about the truth. He listened to the words

the brahmana had spoken, respected by many texts on yoga and meant to sever the bonds of the heart. He swiftly got down, prostrated himself and bowed his head down at his feet. Having sought his pardon, he abandoned all pride about being a lord of men and spoke.

‘“Who are you? You wear a sacred thread. Are you one of the brahmanas who wander around in disguise? Which avadhuta are you? Whom do you belong to? [148] Where have you come from? Why have you come here? Do you intend our benefit? Are you the pure one? [149] I am not scared of the *vajra* of the king of the gods, or the trident of the three-eyed one, or Yama’s staff, or the weapons of the fire god, the sun god, the moon god, the wind god or the lord of riches. But I am extremely scared of showing disrespect to the lineage of the brahmanas. Therefore, please tell me. You are detached and are disguised in the form of a foolish person. You possess the supreme valour of vijnana, but are roaming around in this way. O virtuous one! Your words have yoga woven into them and we are unable to understand them, even in our minds. I am going to the lord of yoga, who knows the truth about the atman and is the supreme preceptor of all learned sages. [150] I was going to ask the refuge who is Hari himself, descended from his portion as learning. Perhaps you are he. Perhaps you have hidden your signs and are wandering around with a view to scrutinizing people. A person who is bound to the householder stage is blind in his knowledge. How can he possibly know about the movements of lords of yoga? I have myself suffered exhaustion from action. That is the reason I thought you suffered from walking. You have said that the relationship between a master and a servant is unreal. But there must be a foundation to what is witnessed in usual conduct. Water may be unreal. However, when it is placed in a vessel, it is heated by the fire and so is the milk that is placed there. Because of the heat, the grains of rice are softened from the inside. Because the being is associated with the body and the senses, the experiencing of samsara must follow. The king is the chastiser and protector of the subjects. A servant does not grind flour that has already been ground. Following his own dharma and worshipping Achyuta, he can cleanse all his sins. [151] I am proud of being a lord of men. You are supreme among the virtuous and, thanks to my insolence, I

have insulted you. O friend of those who are afflicted! Please show me that kind of friendship, so that I can overcome the sin of having slighted a virtuous person like you. You are a friend of the well-wisher of the universe, who does not undergo any transformations. Because of your tranquility, you have overcome all sense of the body. Through my own deeds, a person like me has certainly insulted a great person. Even if I am like the wielder of the trident, it is certain that I will soon be destroyed."'

Chapter 5(11)

'The brahmana said, "Though you are not wise, you are using the words of a wise person. Just because you have spoken in that way, you do not become the best among those who are extremely learned. O king! Sages who have examined the nature of the truth, do not discuss such relationships [152] or the attachment to the householder stage. They are interested in the knowledge that leads to an expansion. Those who speak about the Vedas have generally not purified themselves by speaking about the truth. They only appear to be virtuous. Even if those words [153] are excellent, they do not directly enable one to accept the truth. For example, a person who is in a householder stage behaves as if in a dream. However, a learned person considers these to be inferior. As long as a person is polluted by sattva, rajas and tamas, his senses of perception and action expand the ambit of superior and inferior deeds, because these are not controlled. The mind is attached to material objects and has many desires. The flow of gunas affects the chief among the sixteen. [154] It wanders around, accepting different names and different forms and superior and inferior physical bodies. [155] There is the severe illusion of happiness and unhappiness. At the appropriate time, the fruits of action manifest themselves. The mind embraces the maya that has been created and the living being is whirled around in the wheel of samsara. The *kshetrajna* [156] is always a witness. But as long as this goes on, there is the manifestation of stout and thin. Therefore, it is said that the mind is the cause of this, inferior gunas and the supreme, devoid of gunas. If the mind

is attached to the gunas, the being suffers hardships. When it is no longer attached to the gunas, there is welfare. When the wick of a lamp is smeared with clarified butter, the flame is mixed with smoke. Otherwise, it regains its natural state. In a state where the mind is attached to gunas and karma, it resorts to different kinds of actitivies. Otherwise, it regains its natural state. There are eleven courses followed by the mind—five senses of action, five of perception and the ego. O brave one! It is said that the city [157] is the field for karma to have these eleven kinds of courses. Besides smell, form, touch, taste, sound, evacuation and sexual intercourse, there is another kind of perception that is accepted and this is the sense of 'mine'. Some have said that this is the twelfth action in this field. [158] Material objects, nature, intention, karma and time cause transformations in those eleven courses of the mind and lead to crores and hundreds of crores of modifications. They are unreal and do not result from the kshetrajna, or from themselves. For a living creature, the powers of the kshetrajna always fashion maya. This manifests itself sometimes and sometimes vanishes. Though it is pure, it is sometimes perceived of as an impure doer. [159] The kshetrajna is the ancient Purusha, present in all atmans. It is the supreme and unborn lord and can be perceived because of its own self-luminosity. It is the illustrious Narayana Vasudeva. He controls all atmans through his own maya. It is his own atman that enters and controls all mobile and immobile objects in the form of the wind. He is thus the supremely illustrious Vasudeva. He is the kshetrajna who enters all atmans. O Indra among men! As long as you have a body, as long as your body has maya that has not been dispelled, as long as knowledge has not awakened in you and as long as you are attached, you will not be able to defeat the six enemies [160] and will not be able to know the truth about the atman. Till then, you will wander around. As long as the mind is taken to be an attribute of the atman, a person will be tormented in samsara, which is full of grief, confusion, disease, attachment, avarice, enmity and the sense of 'mine'. It [161] is an adversary that is powerful in its valour. If one neglects it and is distracted, its power increases. Use the weapon of worshipping at the feet of Hari, the preceptor. Defeat what is false and find contentment in your own atman."'

Chapter 5(12)

‘Rahugana said, “I bow down to you. You are the prime cause who has assumed this form. Through the assumption of this form, you have removed the contradictions of your own body. O avadhuta! I bow down before you, you who have assumed all the signs of a brahma-bandhu. I bow down before the one who has hidden his eternal self-realization. I am like a person afflicted by fever, cured by medicine. I am like a person scorched by the summer, revived by cool water. In this wicked body, I have been bitten by the snake that is ego and have lost my vision. O brahmana! Your words have been like the amrita of medication to me. I will submit my doubts to you later, so that my understanding can be excellent. What you have spoken is woven in the yoga of adhyatma. Right now, tell me about this. There is inquisitiveness in my mind. O lord of yoga! You have said that deeds and their consequences, though they are visible and seem to exist, only have a basis in custom. [162] If one examines the truth, they have no substance. My mind is in a whirl. Please explain this.”’

‘The brahmana replied, “The one known as ‘this person’ roams around the earth. O king! He is a modification of the earth. What is the cause behind this? Above the feet, he possesses ankles, calves, knees, thighs, a waist, a neck and two shoulders. He bears a palanquin made of wood on the shoulders. The person known as ‘the king of Souvira’ is seated on that. You are astride it, full of your own arrogance. Blind with evil insolence, you think that you are the king of Sindhu. You have no compassion. One should grieve over these people. [163] They were miserable. But you have seized them by force and made them suffer a greater misery. Their lot is lamentable. You praise yourself, ‘I am a protector of the people.’ This is rash and does not deserve to be stated in an assembly of the wise. We know that the appearance of anything on earth, mobile or immobile, is always subject to destruction. Therefore, inferred from the way everything functions, let it be determined if there is anything other than customary usage. The word ‘earth’ is wrongly used, since its existence is unreal. It will be disintegrated

into *paramanu*s. [164] It is through the ignorance of the mind that one has thought of something special that characterizes the aggregate entity. Similarly, skinny, fat, small, large, temporary, permanent, sentient, non-sentient and other things are brought about by material substances, inherent nature, inclination, time and karma. You should understand that such names result from material objects, past deeds and perceptions of duality. Unadulterated knowledge is alone the supreme objective. The brahman is the truth and has neither an interior nor an exterior. The tranquil one manifests himself and is known by the name of Bhagavat. Wise ones speak of him as Vasudeva. O Rahuguna! He cannot be reached through austerities, sacrifices, refraining from tasks, performing the tasks of a householder, hymns or water, fire and the sun. [165] The only way is to sprinkle oneself with the dust from the great one's feet. When the qualities of Uttamashloka are spoken about, there is no scope of obstruction from vulgar conversation. Those who desire liberation attentively hear this, every day. Pure intelligence then proceeds to where Vasudeva is. Earlier, I was a king named Bharata. I detached myself from everything seen or heard. I freed myself from all association. I always worshipped the illustrious one. However, because of my attachment for a deer, I deviated from my objective and was born as a deer. O brave one! Because of the power of my having worshipped Krishna, even in that body of a deer, my memory did not desert me. Therefore, I detached myself from all association and fearlessly wandered around, undetected. A man must associate with excellent ones who have freed themselves from attachment. Delusion will then be severed with the sword of knowledge. One must hear and recite Hari's account. Thereby one regains one's memory and reaches the ultimate end of this long journey."'

Chapter 5(13)

'The brahmana said, "If a person is submerged in the divisions of rajas, tamas and sattva and the consequent activities, this long journey is extremely difficult to traverse. Such a person only seeks that as an objective and is

whirled around in the pursuit of artha. [166] In this forest of birth and death, he does not find any happiness. O lord of men! There are six bandits, led by a wicked leader, who forcibly rob all the wealth. [167] They are like jackals and wolves who enter when one is distracted and carry away lambs. It [168] is dense with a copious mass of creepers, grass, clumps and hollows, where one is attacked with the stings of gnats and mosquitoes. Sometimes, a city of the gandharvas is seen. [169] Here and there, evil spirits fleetingly appear, like meteors. The intelligence strives to find a resting place, water and wealth. Here and there, they rush around in the forest. [170] Sometimes, smoke-coloured dust is raised by a whirlwind. Because of the dust, one is unable to discern the directions. [171] There is the sound of crickets that cannot be seen and this pains the ears. The mind is aggrieved by the hooting of owls. Suffering from hunger, one seeks refuge with unholy trees. Sometimes, he follows a mirage and runs around. Sometimes, he rushes towards a river that has no water. With no food left, they fall on each other. Sometimes, one approaches a conflagration and is scorched by the fire. Sometimes, while despondent, lives are plundered by *yaksha*s. [172] For some, while the mind is despondent, one's possessions are robbed by those who are braver. Grieving and confused, one loses one's senses. Some enter a city of the gandharvas and are delighted for a while, like someone who has attained success. Sometimes, one has to walk when one's feet are pierced by thorns and sharp stones. Distressed, one tries to climb a mountain. At every step, the person is afflicted from the inside and the outside. He becomes angry with the members of the family. Sometimes, a person is swallowed by a python. In that desolate spot, he is pierced and cannot understand anything. Sometimes, he lies down as one bitten by a poisonous snake. Blind, the person falls down into a dark pit. Sometimes, he searches for insignificant juices [173] and is dishonoured and aggrieved, set upon by bees. Even if he obtains something with a great deal of difficulty, it is forcibly robbed by someone else. Sometimes, he is unable to do anything against the cold, the heat, the wind and the rain. Sometimes, they sell whatever they possess. Because they act deceitfully for the sake of wealth, they cause enmity amongst each other. Sometimes, they are bereft of all riches and cannot find

a place to lie down, sit or stay. They seek it from others and unable to find success, cast their eyes on the possessions of others, thereby earning dishonour. Monetary transactions with each other increase the ties of enmity with each other. Sometimes, they enter into matrimonial alliances with each other. They travel along that long road, suffering hardships because of lack of money. They wander around, suffering from many kinds of disease. Here and there, there are types of distress. He has to abandon a newborn and take with him the ones who are alive. O brave one! Everyone is wandering around on this long road, because no one resorts to the yoga that enables one to cross over. The spirited ones vanquish the Indras among *diggaja*s. [174] All of them think that the earth is theirs and are tied to enmity. They lie down, dead in the battle. But they do not reach the spot reached by the person who has cast aside his staff and is bereft of enmity. Some resort to the arms of creepers. [175] Resorting to these, one desires to hear the indistinct calling of birds. Here and there, one is terrified by the roars of lions. A person contracts friendship with cranes, herons and vultures. Deceived by them, he enters a flock of swans. But since their conduct doesn't appeal to him, he approaches monkeys. These species are attached to gratification of the senses and satisfy their senses exceedingly well. They look at each others' faces and forget that life has a limited span. He finds pleasure in the trees and is attached to a wife and sons. Distressed in heart, he is disabled by a bond he himself creates. Sometimes, because he is distracted, he falls into a cave in the mountain. Scared of the elephant, [176] he hangs on, clinging to a creeper. O destroyer of enemies! Even if he somehow manages to free himself from this hardship, he again pursues artha. Submerged in illusion, he travels along that path of material pursuits. Such a wandering person never knows. O Rahugana! You are also proceeding along that path. Cast aside your rod and have friendship with all creatures. Conquer the false in your own self and heighten service towards Hari. Seizing the sword of knowledge, cross over to the other side."'

'The king replied, "Wonderful! Birth as a human is better than all other kinds of births. In the next life, other kinds of birth are inferior, unless there is abundant association with great-souled ones who have realized their at-

mans in the glory of Hrishikesha. It is not extraordinary that the dust of your lotus feet should generate unadulterated devotion towards Adhokshaja and destroy impurities. I suffered from vain arguments and lack of discrimination and even a momentary association with you now has severed their foundation. I bow down to the great ones. I bow down to infants, the young and the aged, to those brahmanas who bear the marks of avadhutas and roam around the earth. May all the kings be fortunate."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'O Uttara's son! The son of the brahmana rishi [177] was supreme in his comprehension. Although Rahuguna had shown him disrespect, out of his great compassion, he instructed the lord of Sindhu the truth about the atman. He was like a full ocean where the waves of the senses had been quietened. After his feet had been worshipped by the pitiable one, [178] he continued to wander around the earth. The lord of Souvira understood the truth about the paramatman from an excellent person and abandoned the ignorance in his intelligence of identifying his atman with his body. O king! This is the great realization of someone who seeks refuge with the illustrious one.'

The king [179] replied, 'O immensely fortunate one! There are many kinds of knowledge in what you have narrated, directly and indirectly, through your words—the path followed by living beings in this material world. This will not be easily understood by those who are ignoble in their minds, or by those who are not intelligent. This is very difficult to comprehend. Therefore, it must be instructed with complete explanations.'

Chapter 5(14)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Because of specific gunas like sattva and the others, there are those who confuse the body with the atman and undertake many types of superior, inferior and mixed deeds. They accept and give up a series of different bodies. The experience of samsara is without a beginning and the aggregate of the six senses [180] are like gates. It is like a route that is extremely difficult to traverse and one loses one's path in this wilderness,

under the subjugation of the maya of the illustrious lord, Vishnu. The world of the living is like a caravan of merchants pursuing artha. This forest of samsara is like an inauspicious cremation ground and one experiences the karma one has undertaken earlier. Having entered, one is unsuccessful, even now. There are many kinds of hardships in this world and they can only be pacified by reaching the lotus feet of the preceptor, Hari. But unlike bees, they do not seek these out. Those that are known as the six senses act like bandits. Whatever little wealth a man obtains after a great deal of hardship should be used for accomplishing dharma, the signs of which are worship of the supreme being. From the point of view of the next life, this is what is said to be dharma. However, if a person does not control himself and is not determined in conduct, the riches that should have been spent on dharma are squandered on seeing, touching, hearing, tasting and smelling [181] and pandering to carnal pleasures, just as a caravan with a bad leader is destroyed. Those that are known as relatives, wives and sons are nothing but wolves and jackals in their deeds. Even if one does not desire it and even if one is miserly, as one looks on, the relatives steal the riches, which are like a well-protected lamb. Even if a field is ploughed every year, if the seeds [182] are not burnt down, at the time of sowing, it becomes thick with shrubs, grass, plants and pits. The householder's field of karma is one where the seeds of past karma are not destroyed and remain stored in a reservoir of desire. There are inferior people who are like gnats, mosquitoes, locusts, birds of prey and mice, who cause impediments. Sometimes, one is whirled along this path, with the mind overwhelmed by ignorance, desire and deeds. The desired objective is not accomplished in the world of men and one sees a non-existent city of the gandharvas, as if it actually exists. Like looking for water in the heat, one pursues material objects, eager for drinking, eating, sexual intercourse and other addictions. A person looking for a fire pursues an *ulmuka-pishacha*. [183] Like that, because of an unlimited store of sins, one sometimes pursues a special kind of excrement known as gold and one desires to get gold. Sometimes, one runs after dwelling places, drinks, riches and other objects regarded as necessary for subsistence. Absorbed in these, one wanders around in the forest of samsara. Sometimes, there is a

beautiful woman who is like a whirlwind. Placing her on one's lap, one succumbs to the rajas of desire and when it is night, crosses the ordinances of virtue. Blinded by desire, the person succumbs to excessive lust and does not know that the divinities in charge of the directions are watching. Sometimes, he realizes that material objects are futile and himself meditates about the supreme. However, that memory is generally destroyed and he rushes after objects that are like mirages. Sometimes, the extremely piercing calls of owls and crickets agitate his ears and heart. Direct and indirect enemies cause him great distress, like chastisement at the hands of the king's servants. When the good deeds performed in earlier lives are exhausted, even though he is alive, he is like one who is dead. Even when he is about to die, he runs after riches, which cannot help him in this world or in the next. These objectives are like *karaskara*, *karatunda*, inauspicious trees and creepers and poisonous wells. [184] Sometimes, because of association with wicked people, his intelligence becomes inferior and he approaches heretics. This leads to hardships, like jumping into a river that has no flow of water. Sometimes, he cannot ensure a means of subsistence, even after chasing others. Like a blind person devoid of intelligence, he eats grass that belongs to his father or to his son. It is as if he will eat up his own father or son. Sometimes, he reaches his home, but it is like a forest conflagration. He is eager to obtain some joy, but it is a place that leads to greater miseries. He is severely scorched by the fire of grief and faces disappointment. He loves his riches the most, but the king's servants are like rakshasas and when time turns adverse, they plunder him. Though he is still alive, he seems to be dead and no signs of being alive can be seen in him. Sometimes, because of his wishes, though they do not exist, [185] his father and grandfather appear before him and he experiences the pleasure felt when one has just experienced a dream. Sometimes, he wishes to climb the extremely heavy mountain that consists of a householder's tasks. However, his mind is afflicted by the hardships of the material world. Entering a field that is filled with thorns and sharp pebbles, he laments. Sometimes, his inside is consumed by the fire that is extremely difficult to bear [186] and, unable to tolerate it, he becomes angry with his own family members. Sometimes,

the python of sleep devours him. Immersed in that blinding darkness, he lies down, as if in a desolate forest. Like a dead body that has been flung away, he does not know anything. Sometimes, the teeth of his pride are shattered by wicked people who are like poisonous snakes. He cannot sleep, not even for an instant. His heart is distressed and his consciousness becomes less and less. Blind, he falls down into a pit. Sometimes, he searches for drops of honey to satisfy his desire and seizes another person's wife or property. The king or the husband kills him and he falls into fathomless hell. Therefore, it is said that both types of karma [187] sow the seeds for the atman to remain in samsara. If the person manages to free himself from the bonds, [188] Devadatta takes it away and Vishnumitra takes it away from him. These things do not remain in the same place. Sometimes, he cannot counter the cold and the wind, hardships that are *adhidaivika*, *adhibhoutika* and *adhyatmika*. [189] Thinking endlessly about these, he becomes despondent. Sometimes, in business transactions, he acts deceitfully and takes away trifling bits of riches [190] from others. Because of this deceit for the sake of riches, enmity results. There are many kinds of impediments along this path—happiness and unhappiness, attachment, hatred, fear, pride, distraction, madness, grief, confusion, avarice, jealousy, dishonour, hunger, thirst, mental disease, physical disease, birth, old age and death. Sometimes, driven by divine maya, a person embraces the arms that are like creepers [191] and loses all discrimination and knowledge. His heart is anxious to find a house for enjoyment. In that abode, he becomes attached to sons, daughters, wives and their pleasant conversations and glances. Thus, he loses his own self and flings himself into a blinding and limitless darkness. The illustrious Vishnu is the wielder of the chakra that has the characteristic of the incessant and progressive revolution of time, beginning with paramanu and ending with *parardha*. [192] In the twinkling of an eye and while they look on, he takes away all living creatures, from clumps of grass to Brahma. Their hearts are terrified of the lord whose own weapon is like the wheel of time. He is the illustrious lord of sacrifices. But a person ignores him and worships the gods of heretics, which are like herons, vultures and cranes on banyan trees. He accepts those who are discarded by the ordinances of no-

ble ones. The heretics are deceivers and when he is deceived by them, he returns to the fold of brahmanas and amidst them, follows the rites of good conduct sanctioned in the shrutis and the smritis, upanayana and the others. He worships the illustrious one, the lord of sacrifices. However, if he does not find pleasure in the rites of the sacred texts, impure, he goes to the fold of shudras and like one born as a monkey, indulges in sex and the maintenance of the family. There, he behaves as he wishes, without any restrictions. Limited in his intelligence, he amuses himself. Looking at each other's faces, they indulge in carnal acts and forget that time has a limited span. Sometimes, as a householder and like a monkey, he finds pleasure in the enjoyments of the body, which are like trees. He spends all his time in attachment to the wife and the sons. In this way, without any restriction, he proceeds along this path. Fearing the elephant that is death, he usually falls into a dark cave in a mountain. Sometimes, he cannot counter the cold and the wind and other adhibhoutika hardships that make the mind and the body suffer. He is anxious about material objects and becomes despondent. Sometimes, in business transactions, he is deceitful and obtains riches through such fraudulent conduct. Sometimes, when his wealth is exhausted, he cannot find a bed, a seat, or a means of satisfying material desires. When his wishes are not satisfied, his mind is made up that he should obtain these through unfair means and he is thus generally dishonoured by people. In this way, because of riches, enmity is increased. Because of former desires, [193] he contracts a false marriage. Thus, in this material path of samsara, there are many kinds of hardships. A person gains and a person loses what someone else gains. Sometimes, he accepts a newly born and sometimes, abandons it. He is confused and laments. Sometimes, he is terrified and exclaims and weeps. At other times, he is delighted and laughs. He is bound and shunned by virtuous people. Following the road of material objectives in this world of men, the caravan has still not reached the ultimate objective and returned. That can only be achieved through the instructions of yoga, by sages who have cast aside their rods and are tranquil in conduct and self-controlled. They easily obtain the atman. Royal sages who have performed sacrifices and conquered the directions cannot reach it, not to speak of oth-

ers. Because of the sense of "mine", they enter into enmity and lay down their bodies in the field of battle. Killed, they give up their own lives. Sometimes, a person clings to the creeper of karma and somehow, manages to free himself from the miseries of hell. However, he again has to follow the path of samsara and joins the caravan in the world of men again. This is true even of those who have ascended upwards.

'Therefore, a song is chanted there. "The son of Rishabha was a royal sage. His mind was great-souled. The king soared up to Garuda's path, something a fly cannot aspire to. A wife, sons and well-wishers are close to one's heart and are difficult to cast aside. However, wishing to serve Uttamashloka, even as a young man, he abandoned them, like excreta. It is difficult to cast aside the earth, sons, relatives, wealth and the wife. Nor did he hanker after Shri, sought after by the best among the gods, even though she always wanted his favourable glances. This is appropriate for a king who wished to devotedly serve Madhu's enemy." In the mind of such a person, these are insignificant trifles. When he cast aside his body in the form a deer, he happily chanted loudly. "I bow down to Hari Narayana. He is the fount of yoga and *samkhya*. [194] He is the lord of Prakriti. He is the lord of sacrifices and dharma. He is the one who confers the accomplished rites." This account of the royal sage Bharata's conduct, qualities and deeds is revered by devotees of the illustrious one. It confers blessings, lifespans, wealth, fame, heaven and liberation to those who respect it, hear it and make it heard. Such people obtain all benedictions for themselves and do not hope for anything from anyone else.'

Chapter 5(15)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Bharata's son was known as Sumati. In kali yuga, there will be some heretics who will follow in the footsteps of Rishabha. Wicked in their intelligence, those ignoble ones will think of him as a divinity, one who is not accepted in this way in the Vedas. Through his wife Vriddhasena, he had a son named Devatajit. His son, [195] through Asuri, was De-

vadyumna. Through Dhenumati, Devadyumna had a son named Parameshthi. Through Suvarchala, Parameshthi had a son named Pratiha. He remembered the great being and having purified himself, taught about knowledge of the atman. Through Suvarchala, [196] Pratiha had three sons, Pratiharta and others. Through Stuti, Pratiharta had two sons—Aja and Bhuman. Through Rishikulya, Bhuman had a son named Udgitha and through Devakulya, he had a son named Prastava. Through Niyutsa, Prastava had a son named Vibhu. Through Rati, Vibhu had a son named Prithusena. Through Akuti, Prithusena had a son named Nakta. Through Druti, Nakta had the excellent royal sage, Gaya, as his son. He was extensive in his learning. For the protection of the world, he was born as a portion of the illustrious Vishnu himself and assumed a form that was full of sattva. With the qualities of pure sattva, he obtained the status of a great being. He followed his own dharma and protected the subjects. He made them happy by providing a means of subsistence. He tended to them and chastised them, according to the norms. He performed sacrifices to the illustrious great being, the brahman, who is present in all atmans, superior and inferior. He surrendered himself and served at the feet of those who had signs of knowing about the brahman, the supreme objective. Through continuous bhakti yoga towards the illustrious one, his intelligence was suffused with extreme purity and he no longer identified with that which was not the atman. He himself realized the brahman in his own atman. In this way, without any pride, he ruled over the entire world.

'O Pandaveya! Those who know about the ancient accounts sing a chant about him. "Which other king can perform the deeds of Gaya? He was revered because of his sacrifices. He was extremely learned and protected dharma. Shri came to him. He was the leader in an assembly of the virtuous. He was virtuous and served the virtuous. Who other than him has been born as a portion of the illustrious one? Extremely happy, the virtuous daughters of Daksha bathed him in the waters of the rivers and their benedictions are always true. [197] He was himself without any desires. However, on seeing his qualities, the earth's milk flowed out of her udders and she allowed herself to be milked, to satisy the desires of the subjects. He had no desires, but the

hymns satisfied all his desires. When he followed dharma and fought against other kings, they offered him their tribute. The brahmanas pronounced their benedictions and in the next life, offered him one-sixth of their good merits. The illustrious one, the lord of sacrifices, came to attend his many sacrifices. Drinking the *soma,* Maghavan was greatly intoxicated. His faith was pure and he did not deviate from bhakti yoga. The illustrious one accepted the fruits of all that was offered. When he is pleased in a sacrificial arena, all the gods, inferior species, men, plants and trees and grass, beginning with Virinchi, are instantly pleased, because he is the seed of the universe. When the illustrious one was himself pleased, all of them were pleased with Gaya." Through Gayanti, Gaya had three sons—Chitraratha, Sugati and Avarodhana. Through Urni, Chitraratha had a son named Samrat. Through Utkala, Samrat had a son named Marichi and through Bindumati, Marichi had a son named Binduman. Through Saragha, Binduman had a son named Madhu. Through Sumanas, Madhu had a son named Viravrata. Through Bhoja, Viravrata had sons named Manthu and Pramanthu. Through Satya, Manthu had a son named Bhouvana. Through Dushana, Bhouvana had a son named Tvashta. Through Virochana, Tvashta had a son named Viraja. Through Vishuchi, Viraja had one hundred sons. Of these, Shatajit was the eldest. There was also one daughter. There is a shloka about him. [198] "Viraja was the ultimate son born in Priyavrata's lineage. [199] He performed a large number of deeds, just as Vishnu does among the large number of gods."'

Chapter 5(16)

The king said, 'You have specifically spoken about the expanse of the globe, heated by the sun, and where the moon and the large number of stellar bodies can be seen. Within that, the wheels of Priyavrata's chariot created seven moats that became the seven oceans. O illustrious one! You have also said that this led to seven specific dvipas being created. I now wish to know everything about their measurements and characteristics. He is subtle

and without gunas. The illustrious one is self-luminous and is the supreme brahman. He is known as Vasudeva, but it is difficult to absorb this form. Therefore, the mind focuses on the illustrious one's gunas in his gross form. O preceptor! You should describe those to me.'

The rishi replied, 'O great king! No man, even if he possesses the life-span of the gods, can completely comprehend the illustrious one's maya, gunas, powers and limits, through the mind or through words. Therefore, I will specifically expound to you the foremost names, forms, measurements and characteristics of the chief places in the globe. This world is like a lotus and this dvipa [200] is in its inner core. It extends for one hundred thousand yojanas and is circular, like the leaf of a lotus. There are nine varshas within it, each nine thousand yojanas in expanse. They are clearly separated from each other by eight mountain ranges that form the boundaries. The varsha that is in the centre is known as Ilavrita. In its navel is the king of all the *kulachala*s, [201] Meru, which is golden everywhere. It is as tall as this dvipa. [202] It is like the pericarp of the lotus that is the earth. The top extends for thirty-two thousand yojanas and the base is sixteen thousand yojanas. That much is entered within the earth. [203] To the north of Ilavrita, one after another, there are three mountain ranges—Nila, Shveta and Shringavan. These mountains form the boundaries between the varshas of Ramyaka, Hiranmaya and Kuru. They extend eastwards and westwards, one after another, for two thousand yojanas, right up to the saltwater ocean. [204] Progressively, as one moves outwards, each mountain is one tenth in height from the one that preceded it. [205] In this way, to the south of Ilavrita are the mountain ranges Nishadha, Hemakuta and Himalaya. Like Nila and the other mountains, they extend towards the east. Each is ten thousand yojanas in height and these form the boundaries between the varshas known as Hari, Kimpurusha and Bharata. Similarly, to the west and east of Ilavrita, right up to the mountains Nila and Nishadha, are the mountains Malyavan and Gandhamadana. They are two thousand yojanas in expanse and form the boundaries of Ketumala and Bhadrashva. On the four sides of Meru are the four mountains Mandara, Merumandara, Suparshva and Kumuda. The length and height of each has been computed as ten thousand yojanas. There are

four large trees that stand at the top of these mountains like flagstaffs—*chuta, jambu,* kadamba and *nyagrodha*. They are more than one thousand yojanas tall and the branches extend for the same expanse. Each has a trunk with a circumference of one hundred yojanas. O bull among the Bharata lineage! On each mountain, there are four lakes made out of milk, honey, sugar cane juice and fresh water. Large numbers of minor divinities drink these and easily develop their powers of yoga. There are also four divine gardens—Nandana, Chaitraratha, Vaibhrajaka and Sarvatobhadra. The best among the immortals go there, along with their wives, who are like ornaments for their husbands. They amuse themselves there, with their glories praised by large numbers of minor divinities. [206] On the slopes of Mandara stands the divine chuta tree and it is eleven hundred yojanas tall. Fruit, as large as summits of mountains and succulent as amrita, fall from this. They are crushed when they fall down and copious quantities of extremely sweet and extremely fragrant juice start to flow, creating a reddish river known by the name of Arunoda. Descending from the summit of Mandara, it flows to the east of Ilavrita. Bhavani's attendants, the wives of the auspicious people, [207] savour this and their limbs become extremely fragrant from the contact. In every direction, the scent extends for ten yojanas. In this way, jambu fruits that are as large as elephants and possess very small seeds, fall down from a great height and are shattered. The juice results in a river named Jambu and it descends ten thousand yojanas from the summit of Merumandara, flowing through and flooding the south of Ilavrita. The mud on both banks of the river is saturated with this juice. When the wind and the sun react on this, a gold named Jambunada is created and this is always used for the ornaments of the immortals. This is indeed wonderful. The gods and their young wives wear ornaments like crowns, diadems, bracelets, girdles and other objects made out of this. There is a gigantic kadamba tree on Suparshva. From a hollow in this tree, five flows of sweet honey emerge and each is five *vyama*s wide. [208] These descend from the summit of Suparshva and flow and cause delight to the west of Ilavrita. There are those who savour these and the fragrant scent that emerges from their mouths spreads in every direction for one hundred yojanas. Similarly, there is a banyan tree named

Shatavalsha on Kumuda. Streams of milk, curds, honey, clarified butter, molasses, food, garments, beds, seats, ornaments and every other object of desire flows from its trunk. Descending from Kumuda's summit, these cause joy to the north of Ilavrita. Subjects who savour these flows never suffer from wrinkles, grey hair, fatigue, perspiration, bad odour, old age, disease, death, cold, heat, pale complexion or any other kind of hardship or torment. As long as they are alive, their happiness is unlimited. Like filaments that surround the core of a lotus, there are twenty mountains on all directions of Meru—Kuranga, Kurara, Kusumbha, Vaikanka, Trikuta, Shishira, Patanga, Ruchaka, Nishadha, Shinivasa, Kapila, Shankha, Vaidurya, Jarudhi, Hamsa, Rishabha, Naga, Kalanjara, Narada and another. The mountains Jathara and Devakuta are to the east of Meru. They are eighteen thousand yojanas long and two thousand yojanas in breadth and height. In this way, the mountains Pavana and Pariyatra are to the west, Kailasa and Karavira to the south and Trishringa and Makara to the north. [209] Surrounded by these eight mountains, the golden mountain shines like a circle of fire. The city of the illustrious one who is his own creator [210] is located on Meru's summit. It is square in shape and its area has been computed as ten thousand yojanas. It is spoken of as Shatakoumbhi. [211] All around it, depending on the direction, are the abodes of the eight guardians of the world. [212] These cities are similar in form, but one-fourth in size.' [213]

Chapter 5(17)

Shri-Shuka said, 'At the place where the sacrifice was held, the illustrious Vishnu himself appeared in the form of Trivikrama. [214] The nails on the big toe of his left foot shattered the covering of the cosmic egg and entered inside. Through that opening, a flow of water emerged and covered it [215] externally. While washing his lotus feet, the water turned red from the dust. It washed away all the sins of the world. But despite touching these, it remained pure. Thus, words described it as Bhagavat-padi. [216] After a long period of time, measured in thousands of *yuga*s, it descended on top of the

celestial regions and is spoken of as Vishnu-pada. Uttanapada's son [217] was brave in his vows and supremely devoted to the illustrious one. Even now, with great reverence, he bears it on his head there, [218] saying, "This is the water from the feet of our family deity." Thus, his bhakti yoga towards the illustrious one is constantly increased and firmly saturates his heart. Because of the eagerness, he loses himself and tears spontaneously flow from his half-closed eyes, which are like the buds of lotuses. The unadulterated bliss is manifested in his body hair standing up. The *saptarshi*s [219] who are there certainly know about its powers, regarding it as the ultimate end of their austerities. They are always engaged in bhakti yoga towards the illustrious Vasudeva, who is in all atmans. Having achieved this, they are indifferent towards all other objectives, even liberation. It is as if their desired liberation has been obtained. With a great deal of respect, they bear it on their matted hair. Thereafter, it descends along the path of the gods, characterized by many thousands of crores of vimanas, to the lunar circle. After flooding this, it descends on Brahma's abode. [220] There, it is divided into four streams that flow in four directions, with four names—Sita, Alakananda, Chakshu and Bhadra. These flow towards the lord of the male and female rivers. From Brahma's abode, Sita flows downwards, through the summits of mountains like Kesara and descends on the peak of Mount Gandhamadana. It flows eastwards through Bhadrashva-varsha and enters the Kshara ocean. Similarly, Chakshu descends from the summit of Malyavan and flowing with great speed through Ketumala, enters the lord of the rivers in a western direction. To the north, Bhadra descends from the summit of Meru and passing from the summit of one mountain to the summit of another mountain, descends from the peak of Shringavan. It flows through Uttara Kuru and enters the ocean in a northern direction. Similarly, from Brahma's abode, Alakananda flows southwards and passes through the summits of many mountains. Having reached Hemakuta, it descends with great force on the peaks of Himalaya. Almost plundering Bharatavarsha, it flows southwards and enters the ocean there. At every step, men who go to it for the sake of bathing obtain fruits that are extremely difficult to get through horse and royal sacrifices. In each varsha, there are hundreds of other male and

female rivers. They are the daughters of Meru and other mountains. It has been designated that Bharatavarsha is the arena for performing karma. The remaining eight varshas are like heavens on earth, meant as places of enjoyment for those who have come down from heaven. There, the lifespan is ten thousand human years and inhabitants are like gods. They possess the strength of ten thousand elephants and can withstand the vajra. Their strength and youth enables them to enjoy and they indulge in a great deal of sexual activity. Conception results in the wives at the end of this sexual activity, in the last year. Time proceeds as if one is in *treta yuga*. [221] In those places, the lords of the gods have their own respective designated followers and leaders and they worship them with extremely expensive gifts. There are bunches of flowers from all the seasons, fruits and an abundance of shoots. The trees and creepers bend down at the burden. There are beautiful groves, decorated with many trees. In those varshas, the valleys between the mountains have hermitages, mansions and waterbodies with sparkling water. There is the fragrance of many kinds of blooming lotuses. There are flocks of delighted swans, waterfowl, karandavas, *chakravaka*s, cranes and other birds. There are echoes of bees buzzing. Beautiful divine women engaged in many kinds of water sports there, driven by desire. They freely engage in these pastimes, smiling and casting playful glances, enticing the mind and the eye. Even now, in each of the nine varshas, the great being, the illustrious Narayana, shows his favours to the residents by displaying himself to them in many different kinds of forms.

'In Ilavrita, the illustrious Bhava is the only male. Because of a curse imposed by Bhavani, no one who knows about it enters there. A person who enters becomes female. I will tell you about the reason later. [222] Bhavani's lord is tended to by a hundred million thousand of female attendants. The illustrious great being has four forms. [223] The fourth is a tamas form that flows from himself and is known as Samkarshana. Bhava meditates on this form and worships him with this chant. The illustrious one says, "I bow down to the illustrious great being, the reservoir of all the qualities. You are infinite and not manifest. I bow down to you. I worship you. I worship Narayana's lotus feet. You possess all the opulence. You are the supreme

refuge. For your devotees, you manifest yourself in many kinds of forms. You are the one who removes the miseries of earth. You are the lord who is the origin of creation. Maya, guna, mind and action do not affect you. You are the one who witnesses, but is not affected even slightly by that sight. You are the controller. If a person desires to conquer the force of anger and vanquish the senses, why will he not worship you? Your maya shows itself to a person whose vision is imperfect, coppery eyed, like a person who is inebriated with *madhu* or *asava*. [224] The wives of the *naga*s [225] desired to worship you, but their modesty prevented them. Their senses were agitated on touching your feet. The rishis speak of you as the source of creation, preservation and destruction. But you are infinite and beyond these. The earth resides on one of your thousand heads, [226] but you do not even feel it, as if it is but a trifling mustard seed. Mahat was the first of your forms, based on the gunas. It was the reservoir of knowledge and the illustrious Aja was born from this. I was generated from him and with my own energy, created *vaikarika* and *tamasika ahamkara* [227] and the senses. O great-souled one! We are under your subjugation, like birds controlled on a string. It is through your favours that all these, Mahat, vaikarika and tamasika ahamkara and the senses were created by us. A person is confounded by maya and the accumulation of the gunas and does not know who has fashioned this knot of karma. He does not know how to get over it easily. Therefore, I bow down before you, the source of creation and destruction."'

Chapter 5(18)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Dharma had a son named Bhadrashva and he was the chief of his lineage. All the residents of Bhadrasha-varsha were direct devotees of the illustrious one. They were supreme in their meditation of the beloved form of Vasudeva, full of dharma and also known as Hayashirsha. They worshipped him with a chant.

'Bhadrashva said, "We bow down before the illustrious one, the source of all dharma. We bow down before the one who purifies. How wonderful are

the exploits of the illustrious one! A person knows that death will come. But despite knowing, fails to recognize it. He thinks about what is impermanent and undertakes perverse deeds. Even after burning his father or his son, he wishes to remain alive. The wise speak of the world as destructible. The learned, who know about adhyatma, see it in this way. O one without origin! Nevertheless, they are confounded by your maya. O one without origin! This is extremely surprising. I bow down before what you have done. These deeds of yours are for creation, preservation and destruction. That is acknowledged, though you are not touched by any of this. It is not extraordinary that you should not be touched by cause and effect. You are in all atmans, but you are distinct from everything material. At the end of the yuga, the Vedas were robbed by darkness. You assumed a half-man half–horse form [228] and raised them up from *rasatala*. [229] You returned them to the wise one [230] who asked for them. I bow down before the one whose resolution never fails."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'In Hari-varsha, the illustrious one exists in the form of Narahari. [231] I will describe to you the reason for his adopting this form later. [232] That beloved form is worshipped by the great person who possesses all the qualities. [233] He is a great devotee of the illustrious one and through his good conduct, brought salvation to all the *daitya*s [234] and *danava*s [235] who were born in his lineage. Other than Prahlada, no one else indulges in such incessant bhakti yoga. With him, the residents of that varsha worship him and chant the following. "We bow down before the illustrious Narasimha. We bow down before the one who is the energy behind all energy. O one who possesses nails like a vajra! Please manifest yourself. O one whose teeth are like the vajra! Please destroy this reservoir of desire for karma. Devour it. Oum Svaha! Bring fearlessness to my heart. Oum Kshroum! [236] Let there be good fortune in the universe. Let the deceitful be pacified. Let creatures meditate on what will bring each other well-being. Let the mind be calm in the worship of Adhokshaja. Let our intelligence be immersed in him, without any motive. May we not be attached to homes, wives, sons, riches and relatives. If there is any attachment in us, let it be towards those who love the illustrious one. He who is content with whatev-

er is necessary to sustain life becomes successful soon, but not a person who is addicted to the senses. Repeated association and ablutions in tirthas remove the dirt of the body. However, hearing about Mukunda's valour has its own strength and power and listening to this cleanses the dirt of the mind. Who will not serve such devotees? If a person has motiveless devotion towards the illustrious one, all the qualities and all the divinities assemble in him. How can there be great qualities in a person who is not devoted to the illustrious one? His desires are running outwards, towards impermanent pursuits. Just as fish desire to live in water, the atmans of all embodied beings desire to directly reside in the illustrious Hari. If a great person abandons him and becomes attached to his house, that greatness is like the attachment of a young couple. [237] Rajas is the root cause of attachment, misery, anger, the desire for honour, fear and distress. Therefore, abandon the home and the cycle of samsara. Worship Narasimha's feet, the source of freedom from fear."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'With a desire to bring pleasure to Lakshmi, the illustrious one exists in Ketumala in his form of Kamadeva. The sons and daughters of the lord of the subjects there, and the leaders in that varsha, possess a lifespan where a day and a night for them are equal to a human year. [238] The women are terrified of the great weapon [239] of the great being and discharge their embryos at the end of a year. His [240] gait is extremely charming. His smiling face has playful glances. His beautiful eyebrows are slightly raised. His charming and auspicious face is like a lotus and delights Shri, while he finds pleasure in his pleasing senses. In the night, the goddess Rama, [241] accompanied by the daughters of Prajapati Samvatsara, worships the form of the illustrious one, full of maya. She engages in the yoga of supreme meditation. During the day, accompanied by their husbands, she chants the following. "*Oum*. *Hram*. *Hrim*. *Hrum*. [242] I bow down before the illustrious Hrishikesha. You are distinguished by all the special qualities. You are the lord of activities, knowledge, functions of the mind and their objects. You are the sixteen *kala*s. [243] You are the hymns. You are food. You are amrita. You are the powerful one who is omnipresent. You are energy, strength, beauty and desire. I bow down before you. Let there be good for-

tune at both times. [244] You are yourself the lord Hrishikesha, and women worship vows for you. They worship you in this world and do not ask for any other protector. Because they are themselves dependent, their husbands are incapable of protecting their offspring, beloved riches and lifespans. If he himself becomes the protector, how can there be fear from any direction? He saves people who are afflicted by fear. Without you, there will be fear from each other. It is thought that there is nothing superior to realizing your atman. Even if a woman possesses all the material desires, when she worships your lotus feet, she accomplishes all her desires. However, if you are worshipped with a specific desire in mind, you only grant that. O illustrious one! When that desired objective is lost, she is tormented. With their minds on the senses, Aja, Isha, the gods, the asuras and others tormented themselves through fierce austerities, so that they might obtain my favours. But with the exception of those who seek refuge at your feet, no one obtains me. O unvanquished one! I only look at those whose hearts are in you. O Achyuta! Your revered hand is like a lotus and you place it on the heads of those who are devoted to you. O one who is worshipped! You sustain me as a mark. [245] Who can understand the maya of the lord, the controller?"' [246]

Shri-Shuka continued, 'In Ramyaka, the illustrious one manifests himself as the beloved *matsya avatara*. [247] This is the form in which he had shown himself earlier to the resident of that varsha, Manu. Even now, with great bhakti yoga, he chants the following. "I bow down before the illustrious one who is the foremost. I bow down to the one who is sattva. I bow down to the one who is the origin of life. I bow down to the source of strength. I bow down to the great matsya. You are the protector of all the worlds, inside and outside. Your form is not seen, but you roam around with a loud sound. You are the lord and you have brought everything under your subjugation. Men and women, known by different names, are like wooden puppets on a string. Indeed, the guardians of the world were filled with jealousy. Abandoning you, they strove, separately and collectively. But they were unable to save bipeds, quadrupeds, reptiles and everything immobile that can be seen. At the end of the yuga, there was an ocean with a garland of waves. This entire earth is the store of herbs and plants. With me, great in

your energy, you roamed around. I bow down to you, the life of the universe. You are in all the atmans. I bow down before you."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'In Hiranmaya, the illustrious one resides in the form of a *kurma*. [248] He manifests himself in this beloved form before Aryama, the lord of the large number of ancestors, and the other residents of that varsha. He worships him with the chant of this mantra. "I bow down before the illustrious one who is in the form of a tortoise. You are full of the specific traits of *sattva guna*. I bow down before the one whose position cannot be discerned. I bow down before the one who is beyond time. I bow down before the one who goes everywhere. I bow down before the one who is the foundation of everything. Through your own maya, you have given form to everything that appears in many different kinds of forms. Since this perception is false, their number cannot be enumerated. I bow down before the one whose form cannot be ascertained. You are one, but your manifestations are known by different names—born from a womb, born from sweat, born from an egg, plants, mobile, immobile, gods, rishis, ancestors, *bhuta*s, [249] senses, heaven, sky, earth, mountains, rivers, oceans, dvipas, planets and *nakshatra*s. [250] In samkhya, wise people have thought of a specific number for you, [251] though your characteristics, names and forms are innumerable. When one knows the truth, such numbers vanish. I bow down before the one who reveals the truth behind these numbers."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'In Uttara Kuru, the illustrious lord of sacrifices assumes the form of a boar. The goddess earth, accompanied by all the residents of Kuru, worship him through bhakti yoga. She repeatedly chants the following, through which one can approach the supreme one. "I bow down before the one whose truth can be known through different mantras. Your form is the great sacrifice of yajnas and kratus. I bow down before the great being whose deeds are pure. I bow down before the one who is the three yugas. [252] Learned and wise ones can discern your own form, like the quality of fire hidden inside a piece of wood. Wishing to see, they use a churning rod in their minds. I bow down before the one who manifests his hidden form as a result of such acts. The objects of the senses, the activities of the senses, the divinities of the senses, the body, time and ego can indeed be

seen to the result of maya and guna of your atman. There are those who carefully practise the limbs of yoga and sharpen their intelligence. They can discern your form, completely distinct from maya. I bow down before you. Though you do not desire it for your own self, you bring about the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe. Resorting to you and facing you, maya and the gunas wish to do this, like iron moved by a lodestone. I bow down before the one who is a witness to the gunas and karma. You are the original boar. When I was in rasatala, you crushed the daitya who was like an enemy elephant. [253] Placing me on the tip of your tusks, you emerged from the water of the ocean, playing like an elephant. I bow down before the powerful lord."'

Chapter 5(19)

Shri-Shuka said, 'In Kimpurusha-varsha, there is the supreme devotee of the illustrious one, Hanumat. Along with the *kimpurusha*s, devotedly, he always worships the original being, Lakshmana's illustrious elder brother and Sita's beloved, Rama. He is constantly engaged in serving at his feet. Arshtishena and the gandharvas sing the supremely auspicious account of the illustrious one, his master. He listens attentively and chants himself. "I bow down to the illustrious Uttamashloka. I bow down to the noble one who possesses the signs and is virtuous in conduct. I bow down to the one who has controlled his mind and is worshipped by people. I bow down to the one who is a touchstone for identifying virtuous people. I bow down to the divinity who is devoted to brahmanas. I bow down to the great being. I bow down to the great king. I bow down to the one who is pure consciousness, the one who alone is knowledge. Through his energy, he destroyed all the states caused by the gunas. He is transcendental and tranquil, beyond names, forms and ego. He can be obtained by those who are pure. The lord's avatara in the mortal world wasn't only for the destruction of *rakshasa*s, but also for instructing mortals. He takes delight in his own atman. How else could the lord have suffered miseries on account of Sita? The at-

man [254] is the best well-wisher for those who have realized their atmans. The illustrious Vasudeva is not attached to anything in the three worlds. He cannot have suffered hardships on account of a woman. Nor would he have cast aside Lakshmana. [255] Noble birth, greatness, good fortune, eloquence, intelligence and form do not cause any pleasure to him. Lakshmana's elder brother contracted friendship with us, dwellers of the forest, who do not possess these qualities. Gods, asuras, apes and men should worship Rama, who is Hari in human form, with all their souls. He is best among those who are grateful. He conveyed all the residents of Uttara Kosala to heaven."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'In Bharatavarsha, the illustrious one is known as Nara-Narayana. [256] His movements cannot be discerned. To show favours and compassion to those who wish to realize their atmans, till the end of the *kalpa*, [257] he practises austerities and these increase dharma, knowledge, non-attachment, powers, control of the senses and freedom from ego. The illustrious Narada desired to instruct Savarni about samkhya, yoga and the process of realizing the illustrious one. Therefore, with the residents of all *varnas* and ashramas [258] in Bharata, he [259] worshipped him with great devotion and chanted the following. "I bow down before the illustrious one who has conquered the senses. I bow down before the one who has no attachment for material objects. I bow down before the one who represents riches for those in penury. I bow down before the one who is a bull among rishis from among all the rishis, Nara-Narayana. He is the supreme preceptor for those who are paramahamsas. I bow down before the one who is the lord of those who have realized their atmans. He is the cause behind creation, preservation and destruction, but those do not bind him down. Though he is in the body, bodily ailments do not affect him. He is a witness whose vision is not tainted by the gunas. I bow down before the one who is non-attached and is an impartial witness. O lord of yoga! The illustrious Hiranyagarbha [260] spoke about the greatest proficiency in yoga. At the time of death, one must give up identification with the body and devotedly turn one's mind towards the one who is *nirguna*. [261] A person addicted to sensual pleasures in this world and in the next thinks about sons, wives and wealth. If like that, a learned person only thinks about the loss of this wicked body, his efforts

have been futile. O lord! O Adhokshaja! With your maya, you have given us this wicked body and the sense of 'I' and 'mine'. These are difficult to give up. Give us the yoga, your natural attribute, so that we can quickly sever these. In this Bharatavarsha, there are rivers and many mountains—Malaya, Mangalaprastha, Mainaka, Trikuta, Rishabha, Kutaka, Kollaka, Sahya, Devagiri, Rishyamukha, Shrishaila, Venkata, Mahendra, Varidhara, Vindhya, Shuktiman, Rikshagiri, Pariyatra, Drona, Chitrakuta, Govardhana, Raivataka, Kakubha, Nila, Gokamukha, Indrakila, Kamagiri and other hundreds and thousands of mountains. Innumerable male and female rivers are born on the slopes of these mountains. The subjects of Bharata touch these waters. Even their names purify the mind—Chandravasa, Tamraparni, Avatoda, Kritamala, Vaihayasi, Kaveri, Veni, Payosvini, Sharkaravarta, Tungabhadra, Krishna, Venya, Bhimarathi, Godavari, Nirvindhya, Payoshni, Tapi, Reva, Surasa, Narmada, Charmanvati, Sindhu, the river Shona, Mahanadi, Vedasmriti, Rishikulya, Trisama, Koushiki, Mandakini, Yamuna, Sarasvati, Drishadvati, Gomati, Sarayu, Rodhasvati, Saptavati, Sushoma, Shatadru, Chandrabhaga, Marudvridha, Vitasta, Asikni, Vishva and other great rivers. In this varsha, depending on the white, red and dark acts [262] they have themselves performed, they progressively obtain many divine, human or hellish births that are destined. Different varnas are ordained for them. Emancipation is also possible. The illustrious one is in the atmans of all beings. He is beyond attachment and beyond words and does not depend on anyone else. He is Vasudeva, the paramatman. The bond of ignorance is the reason behind these many kinds of births and can be severed through association with people who are devoted to the great being, with traits of bhakti yoga. That is the reason the gods chant, 'These residents [263] must have done something wonderful. Hari himself is kindly disposed towards them. They have obtained birth as humans in the land of Bharata and can serve Mukunda. For us, that only remains a wish. It is through difficult deeds like sacrifices, austerities, vows, donations and such things that we have obtained this trifle of heaven for ourselves. There, because of excessive addiction to the senses, memories of Narayana's lotus feet have been lost. It is better to have a limited lifespan and be born in Bharata than to obtain a state for the lifespan of

a kalpa, after which, one has to be born again. In an instant, a spirited mortal person can renounce everything and proceed to a fearless state near Hari's feet. It is not worth residing in the world of the lord of the gods. The flow of nectar about Vaikuntha's account does not exist there. Nor are there virtuous ones who seek refuge with the illustrious one. There aren't great festivities where sacrifices are performed to the lord of sacrifices. However, there are beings who obtain lives as humans in this world. They possess knowledge, rites and an accumulation of objects. Through these, they are not born again. That is like a bond a forest-dwelling bird heads towards again. [264] They faithfully perform sacrifices, with appropriate mantras and objects, and offer shares of oblations to desired divinities. It is the single one who is separately worshipped under different names. The lord who is complete himself accepts them and bestows benedictions. When men ask him for a desired objective, it is true that he grants them that objective. But since they have to again ask him for something else, he does not confer on them the true objective. When people worship him without any objective, he himself grants them the desired objective, his tender feet, as gentle as foliage. When something is left over after we have enjoyed happiness in heaven, because of a good sacrifice, good studies or a good deed, we desire a birth in Ajanabha-varsha [265], with our memories intact. There, Hari grants benedictions to those who worship him.'" [266] O king! Some have instructed that there are eight smaller dvipas in Jambudvipa. When searching for their lost horse, Sagara's sons dug up the ground and created these. [267] They are Svarnaprastha, Chandrashukla, Avartana, Ramanaka, Mandaraharina, Panchajanya, Simhala and Lanka. O supreme among the Bharata lineage! I have told you about the divisions of Jambudvipa into varshas, exactly as I was instructed.'

Chapter 5(20)

Shri-Shuka said, 'After this, I will describe the dimensions and characteristics of Plaksha and the others and their divisions into varshas. Just as

Meru is surrounded by the region named Jambu, Jambudvipa is surrounded by the salty ocean, which has the same length and breadth as Jambudvipa. [268] Like a grove is surrounded by a moat, the region known as Plaksha surrounds the salty ocean and is double its size. [269] As tall as the jambu tree in Jambudvipa, there is a *plaksha* tree and this gives the region its name. It is made out of gold and rises up. The seven-tongued Agni is worshipped there. Priyavrata's son, Idhmajihva, is the lord of the region and he divided his dvipa into seven varshas. He bestowed them on his sons and retiring from a material existence, immersed himself in yoga. The names of these varshas are Shiva, Yavasa, Subhadra, Shanta, Kshema, Amrita and Abhaya. It is said that there are seven famous rivers and mountains in each. The mountains that form the boundaries are Manikuta, Vajrakuta, Indrasena, Jyotishman, Suparna, Hiranyashthiva and Meghamala. The great rivers are Aruna, Nrimna, Angirasi, Savitri, Suprabhata, Ritambhara and Satyambhara. The four varnas are Hamsa, Patanga, Urdhavayana and Satyanga and they use the waters of these rivers to wash away rajas and tamas and purify themselves. The inhabitants live for one thousand years and they have offspring who are like the gods. They follow the three Vedas and in the form of the sun god, the gateway to heaven and who is his atman, they worship the illustrious one and obtain him. "We seek refuge with the sun god, his atman. [270] This is the form of the ancient Vishnu, the brahman who is true dharma. He is the origin of immortality and death." [271] In Plaksha and the other five dvipas, without any distinction, all men possess long lifespans, sound senses, physical strength, mental strength, intelligence and valour, right from birth. Plaksha is surrounded by an ocean of sugar cane juice that is equal to itself in size.

'Shalmali-dvipa is double that in size and is surrounded by an ocean of liquor. There is a *shalmali* tree [272] there and its dimensions are the same as that of the plaksha tree. This tree is said to give the dvipa its name. It is said that this is the abode of the king of the birds, [273] who worships the illustrious one who is worshipped through hymns. The lord of the dvipa is Yajnabahu, Priyavrata's son. He divided the region into seven varshas among his seven sons and they gave these their names—Surochana, Soumanasya, Ra-

manaka, Devavarsha, Paribhadra, Apyayana and Avijnata. In each of those varshas, the number of mountains and rivers is known to be seven. The mountains at the boundaries are Svarasa, Shatashringa, Vamadeva, Kunda, Mukunda, Pushpa-varsha and Sahasrashruti, while the rivers are Anumati, Sinivali, Sarasvati, Kuhu, Rajani, Nanda and Raka. The men in the varsha are Shrutadhara, Viryadhara, Vasundhara and Ishandhara. [274] Using the Vedas, they worship the illustrious one who is full of the Vedas and whose atman is the moon god. "By using the illumination of his beams, Soma divides into *krishna paksha* [275] and *shukla paksha* [276] and ensures food for the gods, the ancestors and the subjects. [277] Let him be our king."

'Beyond the ocean of liquor there is an ocean of clarified butter that is double in dimensions. As before, this surrounds Kusha-dvipa. In that dvipa, there is a clump of kusha grass that was created by the divinity and this gives the region its name. Because of its own radiance, it is like another fire and illuminates the directions. O king! The lord of that dvipa is Priyavrata's son, known as Hiranyareta. He proportionately divided his own dvipa into seven varshas among his seven sons and they gave these their names—Vasu, Vasudana, Dridharuchi, Nabhigupta, Stutyavrata, Vivikta and Vamadeva. After the division, he himself resorted to austerities. In that varsha, the boundary mountains and the rivers are each said to be seven. The mountains are Chakra, Chatuhshringa, Kapila, Chitrakuta, Devanika, Urdhvaroma and Dravina, while the rivers are Rasakulya, Madhukulya, Mitravinda, Shrutavinda, Devagarbha, Ghritachyuta and Mantramala. The residents of Kusha-dvipa are Kushala, Kovida, Abhiyukta and Kulaka. [278] Accomplished in rites, with these waters, they worship the illustrious one in the form of the fire god. "O bearer of oblations! [279] O fire god! You are the supreme brahman himself. By worshipping the gods, we worship the being whose limbs are part of the sacrifice."

'Similarly, beyond the ocean of clarified butter there is an ocean of milk that is double in dimensions. Just as the ocean of clarified butter surrounds Kusha-dvipa, this surrounds Krouncha-dvipa. This dvipa obtains its name because of Krouncha, king among mountains. The trees on the slopes were shattered by Guha's weapon. [280] However, it was protected by Varuna and

sprinkled with milk, thus obtaining freedom from fear. The lord there is Priyavrata's son, named Ghritaprishtha. He divided his own dvipa into seven varshas among his seven sons and they gave these their names. After instating his sons in those varshas, he himself became a devotee of the illustrious one, the bestower of supreme benefit and fame. He immersed himself in him and obtained Hari's lotus feet. The sons are Ama, Madhuruha, Meghaprishtha, Sudhama, Bhrajishtha, Lohitavarna and Vanaspati. The boundary mountains and the rivers are each said to be seven. The mountains are Shukla, Vardhamana, Bhojana, Upabarhina, Nanda, Nandana and Sarvatobhadra, while the rivers are Abhaya, Amritougha, Aryaka, Tirthavati, Rupavati, Pavitravati and Shukla. The inhabitants of the varsha are known as Purusha, Rishabha, Dravina and Devaka. [281] Using those sacred and sparkling waters, with cupped hands full of water, they worship the god of waters [282] in the form of water. "O water! You are the valour of the supreme being. You purify heaven, earth and the intervening region. You purify and destroy all sin. As we touch you, may we also be purified."

'Shaka-dvipa is beyond the ocean of milk and its dimensions are thirty-two lakh yojanas. It is surrounded by an ocean of churned curds that has the same size. There is a gigantic tree named Shaka there and it has given the region its own name. It is extremely fragrant and the smell spreads throughout the dvipa. The lord of this region is Priyavrata's son, named Medhatithi. He divided it into seven varshas among his seven sons and instated them, and they gave these their names—Purojava, Manojava, Pavamana, Dhumranika, Chitrarepha, Bahurupa and Vishvadhara. Immersing his mind on Ananta, he himself became a devotee and entered a hermitage. The boundary mountains and the rivers are each seven. The mountains are Ishana, Urushringa, Balabhadra, Shatakesara, Sahasrasrota, Devapala and Mahanasa, while the rivers are Anagha, Ayurda, Ubhayasprishti, Aparajita, Panchapadi, Sahasrastuti and Nijadhriti. The men in that varsha are named Ritavrata, Satyavrata, Danavrata and Anuvrata. [283] Through *pranayama*, [284] they cleanse the rajas and the tamas and use supreme meditation to worship the illustrious one, whose atman is in the wind god. "He is inside all beings.

[285] He is the one who maintains the breath of life. He is the lord who is inside. Everything is his manifestation. May he protect us."

'In this way, the ocean of churned curds is surrounded by Pushkaradvipa, which is double its dimensions. It is surrounded on the outside by an ocean of sweet water that has the same size. There is a gigantic lotus [286] there and it possesses one hundred million petals that are made out of polished gold. This blazes like a fire and was created as seat for the one who is seated on a lotus. [287] There is a mountain named Manasottara in the middle of the dvipa and it is the boundary between the varsha on the east and that in the west. Its height and length are ten thousand yojanas. The cities of Indra and the other guardians of the world are in the four directions. Atop this mountain revolves the chariot of the sun, in the form of a year, as it goes around Meru. As it circles, this is one day and one night for the gods. The lord of the dvipa is Priyavrata's son, named Vitihotra. His two sons were Ramanaka and Dhataki. He instated them as the lords of the varshas and like his elder brothers, engaged himself in rites for the illustrious one. The inhabitants of these varshas undertake rites and use these rites to worship the illustrious one in the form of Brahma. They chant, "His manifestation is in the form of the rites and the rituals. With the signs of the brahman, he should be worshipped by people, tranquil and devoted to him and to no other. We bow down to the illustrious one."'

The rishi [288] continued, 'Beyond this [289] and surrounding it, there is a mountain named Lokaloka. This divides the region that is illuminated by the sun from the region that is not illuminated by the sun. This land is as extensive as that between Manasottara and Meru. Beyond this is a region made out of gold, like the surface of a mirror. If something is dropped into it, it can never be regained. Therefore, all living entities avoid this place. This mountain is known as Lokaloka because it is between the region that is illuminated by the sun and the region that is not illuminated by the sun. [290] The lord has fashioned this beyond the three worlds. Such is the height of the mountain that the rays of the sun, Dhruva and minor stellar bodies can illuminate the worlds on one of its sides, but are unable to penetrate to the other side. Wise people have thought about the placing of the worlds, their

dimensions and attributes. The size of the globe has been computed as five crore yojanas. One-fourth of this is the expanse from Meru to Mount Lokaloka. For the welfare of all the worlds, the one who created himself, the preceptor of the entire universe, [291] instated four lords of elephants in the four directions atop it. [292] They are Rishabha, Pushkarachuda, Vamana and Aparajita. The illustrious and supreme one is the great being. He is the lord of all great powers and he is the one who is inside atmans. He is pure sattva and possesses dharma, knowledge, opulence and the eight great siddhis. He manifests himself as Vishvaksena and other forms. He is surrounded by his own prominent attendants. His powerful arms are ornamented with many kinds of weapons. For extending his powers to the elephants and the guardians of the worlds and for the benefit of the worlds that exist all around it, he manifests his form on that great mountain. Using the yoga of his maya, the illustrious one will assume this form till the end of the kalpa. He has fashioned this form for the sake of the maintenance and progress of the many kinds of worlds. The side that is to one side of Mount Lokaloka, right up to the end, has been said to be the expanse of Aloka. [293] It is said that pure lords of yoga are the only ones who can travel to these parts. The sun is in the middle of the egg, in between the earth and the vault of the sky. The distance between the sun and the circumference of the universe is twenty-five crore yojanas. Since the sun was inside this inanimate egg, it is referred to as Martanda. [294] Since it was born from the golden egg, it is known as Hiranyagarbha. [295] Indeed, it is the sun that divides the directions, the sky, the firmament, the earth, heaven, the worlds of emancipation, hell and all the nether regions like rasatala. The sun is in the atmans of the gods, inferior species, humans, reptiles, herbs and plants and all categories of living beings. It is the lord of sight.'

Chapter 5(21)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Thus, the dimensions of the terrestrial sphere, attributes and placement have been described. The dimensions of the heavenly sphere

are described with reference to this. It is in two halves, [296] like the two parts of a bean and the intervening space, which joins the two, is known as *antariksha*. In the midst of these, is the illustrious sun god, the lord of bodies that heat the three worlds. It heats and lights them with its rays. Its slow, swift and equal movements, positions of rising, setting and staying in the middle, occur according to the seasons and are known by names like *uttarayana*, *dakshinayana* and *vaishuvata*. [297] As it passes through Makara [298] and the other *rashi*s, [299] day and night become longer or shorter, or are equal. When it passes through Mesha and Tula, [300] day and night are equal. When it passes through Vrisha and the five other rashis, every month, day increases by one *ghatika* and night decreases by the same amount. [301] When it passes through Vrishchika and the other five, day and night move in the opposite direction. Days increase until dakshinayana and nights increase until uttarayana. It is said that in revolving around Mount Manasottara, the sun traverses nine crore and fifty-one lakh yojanas. Indra's city is to the east of Meru and is known as Devadhani, Yama's city is to the south and is named Samyamini, Varuna's city is to the west and is known as Nimlochani, while Soma's city is to the north and is named Vibhavari. When the sun passes through these four directions of Meru, it is sunrise, midday, sunset and midnight. These indicate the times for living beings to begin and cease activities. For those who reside there, [302] it is always midday and the sun heats, to the left of the mountain and to the right. [303] The sun sets at a point that is diametrically opposite the point at which it rises. When it heats people and makes them perspire, at a diametrically opposite point, it makes them sleep. When it has set, those people are no longer able to see it. When it travels from Indra's city to that of Yama, it traverses two and a quarter crore, twelve lakh and a half and twenty-five thousand yojanas [304] in fifteen ghatikas. [305] In this way, it goes to Varuna's city, Soma's city and back to Indra's city. Planets, the moon, nakshatras and other stellar bodies also rise and set together. The chariot of the sun, which is full of the three Vedas, passes through the four cities. In one muhurta, it traverses thirty-four lakh and eight hundred yojanas. It is said that the chariot has one wheel, which is the year, twelve spokes, six segments of the rim and three naves. [306] At one

end, the axle is fixed on the summit of Meru and at the other end, on Manasottara. Thus fixed, like the wheel of an oil press, it revolves around Mount Manasottara. Just like an oil press, a second axle, which is one-fourth the size of the first, is attached to the first axle. The upper end of this axle is attached to Dhruva. The seat of the chariot is thirty-six lakh yojanas in size and its width is one-fourth that. Yoked by Aruna, [307] the sun's chariot is yoked to seven horses that bear along the god Aditya and have the names of *chhanda*s. [308] Since he is engaged in the task of a charioteer, Aruna sits in front of the sun god, but his face is turned towards the rear. [309] The *valakhilya* rishis [310] are the size of a thumb. Sixty thousand of these are engaged in front of the sun and praise him with their words, chanting hymns. Other rishis, gandharvas, apsaras, nagas, yakshas, *yatudhana*s and many other categories of gods possess many kinds of names and are divided into fourteen, or seven pairs. Under these different names, from one month to another month, they perform their duties in pairs, worshipping the illustrious sun god, who is a form of the atman. [311] The circumference of the terrestrial sphere is nine crore and fifty-one lakh yojanas. In a *kshana*, the sun traverses two thousand yojanas and one *gavyuti*.' [312]

Chapter 5(22)

The king asked, 'O illustrious one! When the illustrious sun god revolves facing the rashis, you have described that he keeps Meru and Dhruva on his left, but it appears as if they are on his right. How will we interpret this statement?'

He [313] replied, 'When a potter's wheel rotates, the motions of ants and other things that are on it are experienced to be different, because they are on different parts of the wheel. Similarly, when the wheel of time, consisting of the nakshatras and the rashis, revolves, Meru and Dhruva are on the right, but the progress of the sun, the planets and other things that are based on it are different, since these are observed in different nakshatras and rashis. He [314] is the illustrious original being, Narayana, himself. He con-

sists of the three Vedas and the wise inquire about him. For the welfare of the worlds and the purification of rites, he divided himself into twelve and arranged *vasanta* and the other seasons, along with the qualities of these seasons. In this world, men who follow the three Vedas and the conduct and path of the varnas and ashramas, faithfully worship him with superior and inferior rituals passed down through yoga. They obtain what is beneficial. He is the atman of the worlds. He is in the the sky, in between earth and the vault of heaven. Following the wheel of time, he enjoys the twelve months named after the rashis. This is the form of the year. The learned say that a month consists of two *paksha*s, a day and a night, which [315] is the period required to cross two and a quarter rashis. It is also instructed that a season is the time required by the sun to traverse one-sixth of a year. The period taken by the sun to traverse half of space is said to be *ayana*. The sun travels at a fast, slow or moderate speed. The time taken to orbit the sky, the earth and the vault of heaven is known as *samvatsara*, *parivatsara*, *idavatsara*, *anuvatsara* and *vatsara*. In this way, the moon is seen to be located a hundred thousand yojanas above the sun's rays. Its speed is faster than that of the sun and it moves on ahead. In two fortnights, it covers what the sun traverses in a month and in one day, it covers what the sun takes a fortnight to traverse. When the kalas of the moon increase, it is day for the immortals and night for the ancestors. When the kalas of the moon decrease, it is day for the ancestors and night for the immortals. Thus, in the first paksha and the next paksha, the moon distributes the breath of life for all living creatures and is known as life itself. One after another, it is in conjunction with a nakshatra for thirty muhurtas. This illustrious one possesses sixteen kalas and is the divinity for the mind, food and amrita. He is spoken of as the breath of life for gods, ancestors, humans, bhutas, animals, birds, reptiles and herbs and plants and as the one who pervades everything. In the wheel of time, the lord has fixed twenty-eight nakshatras, along with Abhijit, [316] three lakh yojanas above the moon. They revolve with Meru on the right. Ushana [317] is observed two lakh yojanas above this. It has a slow, fast or moderate motion and is seen to be ahead of, behind, or along with the sun. It moves like the sun, always favourable to the worlds and generally bring-

ing rain. As it moves, it is seen to counter planets that obstruct rain. [318] The orbit of Budha [319] is described as being two lakh yojanas above that of Ushana. Budha is Soma's son and is generally perceived to be favourable. However, if it does not move along with the sun, there are always storms, clouds, droughts and other such reasons for fear. Angaraka [320] is seen to be two lakh yojanas above Budha. Unless it moves in a retrograde way, it progressively passes through each rashi in three pakshas and traverses all twelve. In general, it is an inauspicious planet, causing calamities. Two lakh yojanas above Angaraka is the auspicious Brihaspati. [321] Unless it moves in a retrograde way, it passes through each rashi in a samvatsara. It is generally favourable to those from the brahmana lineage. Shanaishchara [322] is seen to be two lakh yojanas above Brihaspati. It remains in a single rashi for thirty months and thus requires many anuvatsaras to cover all of them. [323] It generally causes troubles for everyone. Eleven lakh yojanas above Shanaishchara are seen to be the rishis. [324] They always think of tranquility for the worlds and revolve around Vishnu's supreme abode, keeping it to the right.'

Chapter 5(23)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Thirteen lakh yojanas above the rishis is Vishnu's supreme abode. The great devotee of the illustrious one, Dhruva, Uttanapada's son, is said to reside there. His devotion has already been described earlier. Agni, Indra, Prajapati Kashyapa and Dharma simultaneously go around him, showing him great reverence and keeping him to their right. He is worshipped even now, because he sustains the lives of those who will live till the end of the kalpa. He shines constantly. The force of the unmanifest and illustrious one has earmarked him like a stable pillar and all the large number of stellar bodies, planets and nakshatras incessantly use him as a pivot, thus ordained by the lord. Bulls used in threshing corn are yoked to the pivotal post in the middle, using three kinds of ropes—short, medium and long. In their respective places, they walk around in three circles. Simi-

larly, stellar bodies and the planets are fixed to the wheel of time in inner and outer circles. Using Dhruva as the pivot and impelled by the force of the wind, they revolve until the end of the kalpa, like clouds and hawks in the sky, propelled by the wind. The charioteers of the large number of stellar bodies are their past karmas, revolving because of the union between Purusha and Prakriti. It is because of their past good karmas that they do not fall down on the ground. Some imagine this large number of stellar bodies to be in the form of a dolphin. [325] It is described as being supported by the illustrious Vasudeva's yoga. The body of the dolphin is coiled, with the head downwards, and Dhruva is at the tip of the tail. Prajapati, Agni, Indra and Dharma are imagined to be at the tip of the tail. Dhatri, Vidhatri and the saptarshis are on the hip. The body is coiled from left to right. On the right side are located the nakshatras that mark the northern course, while on the left side are the nakshatras that mark dakshinayana. [326] It is as if the coiled body of the porpoise has an equal number of limbs on either side. Ajavithi is on the back and Akasha-Ganga is on the stomach. [327] Punarvasu and Pushya are on the right and left hips. Ardra and Ashlesha are on the right and left feet, to the rear. Abhijit and Uttarashadha are numbered on the right and left nostrils. Shravana and Purvashadha are numbered on the right and left eyes. Dhanishtha and Mula are on the right and left ears. The eight nakshatras that mark the progress of dakshinayana, Magha and the others, are on the ribs to the left. [328] The eight nakshatras that mark the progress of uttarayana, Mrigashirsha and the others, are on the ribs to the right, but in the reverse direction. [329] The others, Shatabhisha and Jyeshtha, are on the right and left shoulders. Agasti [330] is on the upper jaw and Yama is on the lower jaw. Angaraka is on the mouth, Shanaishchara is on the genitals, Brihaspati is on the hump, the sun is on the chest, Narayana is in the heart, the moon is in the mind, Ushana [331] is in the navel, the Ashvins are on the nipples, Budha is in the *prana* and *apana* breath, [332] Rahu is on the throat, Ketu is in all the limbs and the large number of stars are all in the body hair. This is the form of the illustrious Vishnu and all the gods are in him. Every day, at the time of *sandhya*, [333] one should control oneself and watch this form, meditating and worshipping it. "We bow down before the one in whom the

stellar bodies rest. He is the wheel of time. He is the lord of the gods. He is the great being. We meditate on him." This adhidaivika form consists of the planets, nakshatras and stars. If this mantra is chanted thrice, [334] all sins are cleansed. If one bows down, remembers it and chants it thrice, all sins are swiftly and instantly destroyed.'

Chapter 5(24)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Those who are learned say that, ten thousand yojanas below the sun, Svarbhanu revolves like a nakshatra. O son! He was himself a wicked asura, Simhika's son, and certainly did not deserve it. However, through the favours of the illustrious one, he obtained the immortal status of a planet. I will tell you about his birth and deeds later. [335] The sun's globe radiates heat and is said to extend for ten thousand yojanas, while that of the moon is for twelve thousand yojanas. Rahu's extends for thirteen thousand yojanas. Because they created an obstruction for him, [336] he is bound in enmity towards Surya and Chandra and rushes after them on the night of the new moon and the full moon. When he hears about this, to save them from the fear, the illustrious one deploys the beloved weapon that devotees know as Sudarshana. As it revolves around them, [337] its incessant energy is impossible to withstand and he can only tolerate it for a muhurta. Anxious in his heart, he then withdraws some distance away. People speak of this as an eclipse. The same distance below [338] are the abodes of the Siddhas, charanas and vidyadharas. [339] Below this are the worlds where yakshas, rakshasas, pishachas and large numbers of bhutas find pleasure. This space extends as long as clouds are seen and as long as winds blow. The earth is one hundred yojanas below this and its upper limits are as far as the best among birds, swans, eagles and hawks can fly. The location of the earth and the different divisions of the earth has already been described.

'Below this are the seven nether regions, each progressively ten thousand yojanas below the preceding one. They are atala, vitala, sutala, talatala, mahatala, rasatala and patala and their length and breadth are similar. [340] These

are heavens of the nether regions. Even more than heaven, there are objects for gratifying the senses, affluence, bliss, prosperity and power. There are excellent houses, groves and pleasure grounds. Daityas, danavas and Kadru's progeny [341] reside there, always happy because of the attachment of wives, offspring, relatives, well-wishers and followers. The heads of the households are more powerful than the gods. Their pursuit of the senses is unobstructed. They happily reside in this maya. O great king! Using his maya, Maya constructed many kinds of cities there. The wonderful and excellent houses were constructed with the best of jewels. There are walls, gates, assembly halls, *chaitya*s, [342] quadrangles and mansions. There are couples of nagas and asuras. The place is full of pigeons, parrots and *sarika*s. The lords of these regions crowd the artificial grounds. The decorated and excellent houses are radiant. The gardens bring great pleasure to the mind and the senses. There are flowers, bunches of fruit and beautiful new sprouts on the branches of the trees in the groves, embraced by handsome creepers. Couples of beautiful birds frequent the waterbodies, full of sparkling water. Fish leap around and agitate the water. There are lilies, lotuses, white lotuses, blue lotuses, red lotuses and lotuses with a hundred petals, and birds have made their homes in their midst. They find uninterrupted pleasure there and there are the sounds of many kinds of melodious calling that cause delight to the senses. The beauty surpasses that of the world of the immortals. No fear caused by the division of time is discerned there and there is no night or day. Giant serpents reside there and the gems on their hoods dispel all the darkness. Because of the divine herbs, juices, medicines, drinking, eating and bathing, the residents do not suffer from any mental or physicial disease. There are no wrinkles, grey hair or old age. The physical complexion does not fade. There is no bad odour, perspiration, fatigue, lack of energy, or any misery caused by old age. The worlds are auspicious and fortunate, without fear of death. The only fear is from the illustrious one's chakra. When it penetrates there, the pregnant wives of the asuras have miscarriages and abortions because of their fear. Maya's son, Bala, resides in the region of atala. Indeed, it is said that he created ninety-six kinds of maya. Even today, magicians practise some of those. When he

yawned, three types of women were created from his mouth—*svairini*s, *kamini*s and *pumshchali*s. [343] If a man enters the nether regions, they offer him a juice extracted from a herb known as Hataka and this makes him capable, so that they can gratify their own desires. They pursue their urges and seduce him with loving glances, smiles, conversation and embraces. Because of that juice and the enjoyment, a man feels that he is like a god. He takes himself to be extremely powerful, endowed with the strength of ten thousand mighty elephants. Blinded by intoxication, he praises himself. Below this [344] is vitala. The illustrious Hara, Hatakeshvara, resides there, surrounded by his own companions, the large number of bhutas. With the object of increasing the number of Prajapatis, Bhava is united there with Bhavani and from him flows the supreme river known as Hataki, which possesses both their energies. The fire, fanned by the wind, drinks the strength of that river and spits out the gold that is known as Hataka. In the homes of the Indras among asuras, men and women wear ornaments that are made out of this. Below this [345] is sutala. Great in his fame and chanted about in shlokas, Virochana's son, Bali, resides there. The illustrious one wished to bring pleasure to the great Indra, Aditi's son. Therefore, he approached Bali in the form of a brahmachari who was a dwarf and thus robbed him of the three worlds. It was through the favours of the illustrious one that he was then allowed to enter this place, possessing a great prosperity and beauty that Indra and the others do not have. Even now, he follows his own dharma and worships the illustrious one, with all his hardships removed. He did not obtain this because he directly donated land to the illustrious one, who is the infinite refuge for all living beings. His atman is in the atmans of all living beings. He is Vasudeva, the paramatman, the supreme tirtha and refuge. He [346] resorted to him with great devotion and great affection, concentrated in his mind. That is the reason he obtained this direct gate to emancipation and this world and residence, full of prosperity. If a man suffers from hunger, stumbles and falls down, helpless, if he chants his name, his bonds of karma are severed and his sins are instantly washed away. Those who desire emancipation cannot obtain it through any other means. His atman is in all atmans. He is the supreme atman. It is in this way

that his devotees realize the atman. [347] The illustrious one did not really bestow any favours on him by giving him this prosperity and objects of pleasure, which are full of maya, and unsatisfactory, but conferred on him constant remembrance of his name. The illustrious one perceived that there was no other means, except deceit, to take away the three worlds, which are his own body. Therefore, it is said that he bound him in Varuna's noose and confined him in a cave in a mountain. He [348] exclaimed, "Indeed, Indra is said to be learned and experienced, surrounded by advisers who offer him counsel, like Brihaspati, appointed to advise him in private. However, he does not know what is good for him. He ignored Upendra and did not seek service to him as a benediction. Time has a long duration. What is the point of being surrounded by the three worlds, which will end at the end of a manvantara? Indeed, our grandfather [349] valued service to him. He did not accept his father's ancestral kingdom, which was free from fear, after his own father [350] had been killed by the illustrious one. Though that status was offered to him, he only accepted service to the illustrious one. He was great in his sentiments. A person like me is contaminated by desires and cannot follow his path, even if I wish to. Bereft of the favours of the illustrious one, what can those like us do?" His [351] conduct will be narrated later. The illustrious Narayana is the preceptor of all the worlds. With compassion towards his devotees, he is himself stationed there, at the gate. [352] With a desire to conquer the world, the one with the ten shoulders came there and was flung ten crore yojanas away, with a flick from the toe of his foot. [353] Below this [354] is talatala. The Indra among danavas, named Maya, the lord of Tripura, resides there. With a desire to bring welfare to the three worlds, the illustrious Isha, [355] the enemy of these cities, burnt them down. With his own city destroyed, he obtained this world through his grace. [356] He is the preceptor of all kinds of maya. Protected in his greatness by Mahadeva, he has no fear from the Sudarshana. Below this [357] is mahatala, inhabited by the serpents who are Kadru's descendants. They have many hoods and are known as Krodhavashas. [358] They are gigantic in size and the foremost ones are Kuhaka, Takshaka, Kaliya, Sushena and others. They are constantly afraid of the lord of birds, who bears the great being. They find pleasure

there, with their wives, offspring, well-wishers and relatives, often intoxicated. Below this [359] is rasatala. Daityas and danavas reside there. Their names are Panis, Nivatakavachas and Kaleyas. They inhabit a golden city. From the time of their births, these enemies of the gods are extremely energetic and extremely brave. Hari brings benefit to all the worlds. They dwell in that world and their strength and insolence is only contained through his energy. When Indra sent Sarama as a messenger, the words of that mantra caused them to be afraid of Indra. [360] Below this [361] is Patala, the world of the nagas. With Vasuki as the foremost, the leaders like Shankha, Kulika, Mahashankha, Shveta, Dhananjaya, Dhritarashtra, Shankhachuda, Kambala, Ashvatara, Devadatta and the others reside there. They are gigantic in size and extremely intolerant. They possess five, seven, ten, one hundred and one thousand hoods on their heads and the great jewels on these filled the world of Patala with radiance. With their own illumination, they disperse all the darkness.'

Chapter 5(25)

Shri-Shuka said, 'At the foundation of this, [362] and thirty thousand yojanas away, there is a portion of the illustrious one, full of *tamasa*. [363] He is known as Ananta by those who follow Satvata. Because he draws together the seer and the seen, "I" and the sense of pride, those who know the signs describe him as Samkarshana. [364] In the form of Ananta, with one thousand hoods, the illustrious one bears the globe of the earth on a single hood and it appears like a white mustard seed. At the right time, when he desires to destroy it, his extremely beautiful eyebrows are furrowed in intolerance and from between them appears Rudra, known as Samkarshana. He is three-eyed and arises in eleven different forms, each wielding a trident. The lords of the serpents and devotees of Satvata are single-minded in bhakti yoga. They bow down, their own faces glittering because of the radiance of the earrings that adorn them. Their cheeks are extremely beautiful. Delighted in their minds, they see his two lotus feet, with round and red nails that shine

like gems. The daughters of the king of the nagas hope to obtain his blessings. The sphere of his beautiful body is radiant, spotless, long and fair, with beautiful arms that are like pillars made of silver, anointed with sandalwood and aloe paste and *kunkuma*. When they touch his body, their minds are agitated and the one with the makara on his banner enters their hearts. Those beautiful and delicate ones smile with the intoxication of love and glance bashfully at his face, which is like a lotus. His red eyes roll because of the inebriation and he casts merciful glances towards them. He is the illustrious Ananta, an ocean of qualities. He is the original divinity who has withdrawn his intolerance and the force of his rage, for the sake of the welfare of the worlds. The gods, the asuras, the serpents, the Siddhas, the gandharvas, the vidyadharas and large numbers of sages meditate on him. Because of the constant delight of intoxication, his eyes are restless and roll around. The amrita of his speech is excellent, causing delight to his own companions and the leaders of different groups of gods. He wears the *vaijayanti* necklace, whose shine does not fade, and a garland of fresh tulasi leaves. [365] The fragrance of his garland made out of wild flowers is enhanced by the smell of madhu and asava and is rendered more beautiful by the intoxicated bees that surround him and the sweet sounds of melodious singing. He is attired in blue garments and wears a single earring. His beautiful and auspicious hand is placed atop the plough. Just as the great Indra's gigantic elephant wears a golden harness, engaged in his pastimes, he wears a golden girdle. It has been heard that, since the beginning of time, those who desire emancipation meditate on him, so that they can be freed from the bondage of karma, desire and the noose of ignorance that ties down the heart. He swiftly severs the sattva, rajas and tamas that is in the core of the heart. The illustrious Narada, born from Svayambhu, chanted his glories in Brahma's assembly hall, accompanied by Tumburu, [366] and composed a shloka. "He is the cause behind creation, preservation and destruction. It is through his glances that sattva and the other gunas of Prakriti manifested themselves. His form is permanent and without an origin. He is alone the atman who has been manifested in many forms. How can we know him or understand his movements? Because of his great compassion, he assumed a

form that was made out of pure sattva. The manifest and the unmanifest appeared from this. His unmatched exploits are like that of a king of animals. Pervasive in his valour, he engages in these for the sake of delighting the minds of his own devotees. Even if one accidentally hears his name or chants it, even in jest, a distressed person who has fallen down instantly destroys sins, even those of other men. If a person desires emancipation, what refuge other than the illustrious Shesha can he resort to? The globe of the earth, with its mountains, rivers, oceans and living beings is like an *anu* [367] on the head of the thousand-hooded one. The powerful one is infinite and unlimited in his valour. Even if one possesses one thousand tongues, how can one enumerate his powers? These are the powers of the illustrious Ananta. He is unparalleled in his valour. His qualities and traits are limitless. Completely independent, he is stationed at the foundation of the nether regions. Through his pastimes, he maintains and sustains this universe.” Depending on their deeds, those who are in the form of men and wish to satisfy their desires, go to these destinations. I have described them as I have been instructed. O king! These are the different destinations for men, superior and inferior, depending on their inclinations, attributes and proclivity towards dharma. As you asked, I have explained them to you. What else will I speak about?’

Chapter 5(26)

The king asked, ‘O maharshi! Why are there so many different kinds of worlds?’

The rishi replied, ‘There are different combinations of the three gunas in the doer, differences in devotion and varied consequences of karma. Thus, all of these result for everyone. For example, there are prohibited acts characterized by adharma. However, because the doer’s faith varies, there may be differences in the consequences of karma. Right since the beginning, those who are ignorant have performed acts out of desire. As a conse-

quence, there are thousands of different kinds of hell and they vary widely. I will describe them to you.'

The king asked, 'O illustrious one! Do the regions known as hell belong to a specific place, or are they beyond the three worlds? Are they somewhere in the intervening space?'

The rishi replied, 'They are in the intervening space within the three worlds. However, they are in the southern direction, below the earth and just above the waters. The ancestors known as the Agnishvattas and the others also dwell in this direction. Engaged in supreme meditation, they hope for true benedictions for those born in their *gotra*s. Indeed, the illustrious Vaivasvata is the king of the ancestors. He never transgresses the rules set by the illustrious one. His messengers make living beings reach his own dominion. With his companions, he executes the punishment, depending on the kind of karma they have undertaken and their sins. O king! It has been enumerated that there are twenty-one different kinds of hell. I will progressively describe their names, forms and attributes to you. They are Tamisra, Andha-tamisra, Rourava, Maha-rourava, Kumbhipaka, Kalasutra, Asipatravana, Sukara-mukha, Andha-kupa, Krimi-bhojana, Sandamsha, Tapta-surmi, Vajra-kantaka-shalmali, Vaitarani, Puyoda, Prana-rodha, Vishasana, Lala-bhoksha, Sarameya-adana, Avichi and Ayoh-pana. However, there also are [368] Kshara-kardama, Raksha-gana-bhojana, Shulaprota, Dandashuka, Avata-nirodhana, Paryavartana and Shuchi-mukha. These twenty-eight hells are regions where one suffers from many kinds of miseries.

'If a person steals another person's riches, children or wife, he is bound by the noose of destiny. Yama's terrible messengers forcibly hurl him into the hell known as Tamisra. He does not get food or water. He is beaten with rods, scolded and terrible punishments are inflicted on him. Suffering from these miseries there, sometimes, the living entity loses consciousness in a place that is almost entirely dark. [369] In this way, if a person deceitfully enjoys another person's wife or other possessions, he is forcibly hurled into Andha-tamisra. There, the living entity suffers misery and pain. He loses his sight and loses his intelligence. Because of this, he is like a tree whose roots have been severed. That is the reason this is known as Andha-tamisra. [370]

‘A person may be full of “I” and “mine” and identify himself with his body. Seeking to only maintain and support himself and his family every day, he causes injury to beings. Because of this, when he gives up this world and his body, he falls into the inauspicious Rourava. In this world, there are creatures to whom he has caused injury. In the other world, when he faces hardships from Yama, they become *rurus* and cause him injury. [371] Rurus are creatures who are more vicious than snakes. It is because of this that the region is known as Rourava. In this way, if a person only nurtures his own body, he falls into Maha-rourava. The rurus eat flesh there and they kill him for the sake of his flesh.

‘For the sake of sustaining life in this world, a cruel-hearted and fierce person may cook birds and animals while they are still alive. Because of this condemned deed, in the next world, Yama’s followers cook him in boiling oil in Kumbhipaka. [372]

‘In this world, if a person causes injury to the parents or to a brahmana, he goes to the hell known as Kalasutra. There is a plate made out of copper there and its dimensions are ten thousand yojanas. It is heated by the sun from above and by the fire from below. He enters that extremely hot place and suffers from hunger and thirst. The inside and outside of his body is scorched. Sometimes, he lies down. Sometimes, he moves. Sometimes, he remains stationary. And sometimes, he runs. He remains there for as many thousand years as there are body hair on an animal’s body. [373]

‘In this world, even if there is no calamity, a person may deviate from the path of the Vedas and seek refuge with heretics. [374] When he reaches, he is made to enter Asipatra-vana. He is beaten there with whips. He runs around, here and there. However, on both sides, there are forests of palm trees, with leaves like swords. [375] All his limbs are sliced by these. “Alas! I have been killed.” Exclaiming in this way and suffering from great pain, he loses his consciousness and falls down at every step. Having destroyed his own dharma and having followed heretics, he suffers these fruits as a consequence.

‘In this world, a king, or a king’s servant, may inflict punishment on someone who should not be punished. Corporal punishment may be inflict-

ed on a brahmana. In that world, such a wicked person falls into the hell known as Sukara-mukha. Like a piece of sugar cane is crushed in this world, extremely powerful hands crush his limbs there. He cries and laments in a piteous tone. Sometimes, overcome by hardship, he falls down, senseless, just as innocent people who have been imprisoned do in this world. [376]

'In this world, the means of subsistence of creatures have been ordained by the lord. Without understanding this and without understanding the pain caused to others, without understanding what the great being has ordained for a creature and without comprehending the pain his action causes to others, a person may still indulge in acts of causing pain. In the next world, because of this violence, he falls into Andha-kupa. [377] There, those creatures, domestic animals, wild animals, birds, reptiles, gnats, lice, worms, flies and others persecute him from all directions. Agitated and suffering in that darkness, he cannot find any peace or sleep. The being is whirled around, like a creature in a diseased body.

'In this world, a person may eat something without sharing it with others. He may eat whatever he gets, without performing the five yajnas. [378] He is spoken of as being no better than a crow. In the next world, he falls into the worst of hells, known as Krimi-bhojana. There is a pit full of worms there, extending for one hundred thousand yojanas. He becomes a worm there and survives on other worms, himself eaten by other worms. [379] If a person eats without sharing it and offering it to others, he remains there until his sins have been atoned for, for as many years as there are yojanas in that pit.

'In this world, without there being a calamity, a person may forcibly steal the gold or jewels of a brahmana, or of someone else. O king! In that other world, Yama's servants, use red-hot iron balls or tongs to tear out that person's skin. [380]

'In this world, a man may have intercourse with a woman he should not have intercourse with, or a woman may have intercourse with a man she should not have intercourse with. In that world, they are beaten with whips. The man, or the woman as the case may be, is made to embrace a red-hot iron image of a woman, or a man as the case may be. [381]

‘In this world, a person may have intercourse with anyone. [382] In the next world, he is in the hell known as Vajra-kantaka-shalmali. He is impaled there and torn down. [383]

‘In this world, there are those who are from royal lineage, or are the servants of kings. However, though born in lineages that are not heretical, they transgress the ordinances of dharma. After death, they are hurled into Vaitarani. [384] That river is like a moat around that hell and is populated by large numbers of ferocious aquatic creatures. Without losing his breath of life, a man who has transgressed the ordinances thus finds his body devoured by them. Because of his own sins and his wicked deeds, he is borne along this river, full of excrement, urine, blood, hair, nails, bones, marrow, flesh and fat. Suffering, he remembers his deeds.

‘In this world, there are the husbands of vrishala women. Their purity and conduct has been destroyed. They have abandoned rituals and shame. They follow the conduct of animals. After death, they fall down in an ocean that is full of pus, excrement, urine, mucus and dirt and eat nothing but these extremely terrible things. [385]

‘In this world, brahmanas and others may maintain dogs and donkeys, using them to hunt for pleasure and hunting and killing for other than sanctioned purposes. After dying, they become targets for Yama’s servants, who pierce them with arrows. [386]

‘In this world, there are insolent people. Because of insolence alone, they kill animals. In that world, they fall into the hell known as Vaishasa. [387] When they fall into that hell, they are made to suffer and are killed.

‘In this world, there may be a *dvija*. [388] Despite his wife belonging to the same varna, confounded by desire, he may make her drink his semen. Because of this wicked deed, in the next world, he is made to fall into a river of semen and forced to drink this semen. [389]

‘In this world, there are bandits, arsonists and poisoners. Alternatively, kings and servants of kings plunder villages and caravans. After death, Yama’s messengers make them confront seven hundred and twenty hounds, which are ferocious and possess teeth that are like the vajra. They eat them up. [390]

‘In this world, a person may bear false witness, or lie somehow, while transacting objects and donating. After death, such a person goes to the hell named Avichi. He is taken to the summit of a mountain that is one hundred yojanas in height and without any support, is hurled down, face downwards, towards a flat and rocky surface that seems to be made out of water. Since there are no waves, [391] his body is shattered into fragments that are as small as sesamum seeds. If he does not die, he is raised up and flung down again.

‘In this world, a brahmana, a king or a vaishya may drink soma, though he is not entitled to do so. Or being confused, may drink liquor while observing a vow, or make his wife drink it. Such people are conveyed to a hell. Their chests are crushed with feet. Iron molten by the fire are poured into their mouths. [392]

‘In this world, a person may know himself to be inferior, because of birth, austerities, learning, conduct, varna or ashrama. However, because of his own nature, he may not show great respect to those who are superior. He is as good as dead. When he dies, he is conveyed to the hell known as Kshara-kardama. [393] With his head facing downwards, he is hurled down and faces many kinds of terrible hardships.

‘In this world, there are men who worship with human sacrifices. There are also women who eat the flesh of men thus sacrificed. These people are like animals. People who kill in this way are tormented in Yama’s abode. Those killers are sliced to bits by large numbers of rakshasas, who drink their blood and happily dance and sing, just like those cannibals did in this world. [394]

‘In this world, in forests and in villages, there are those who approach and create trust in innocent people who wish to be protected. Thereafter, they play with them with spears, or tie them up with ropes, thus causing them pain. After death, such people are tormented by Yama and their bodies are transfixed with spears. [395] They are afflicted by hunger and thirst. They are tormented by birds like herons and vultures, possessing sharp beaks. In this state, they remember their own wicked deeds.

‘In this world, there are men who are naturally angry, causing pain to living creatures. They are like *dandashuka*s. [396] After death, they fall into the

hell named Dandashuka. There are five-headed and seven-headed dandashukas there. They approach and devour them like mice.

'In this world, there are people who confine creatures into blind holes, granaries and caves. When they enter the next world, they are confined in a similar way, suffering from fire and poisonous fumes. [397]

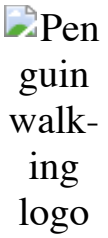
'In this world, the master of a household may often be angry if unexpected guests turn up, desiring to burn them down with his angry glances. He glances at them with wicked eyes. In hell, there are vultures, herons, crows and other birds that possess beaks like the vajra. With great force, they violently pluck out his wicked eyes. [398]

'In this world, a person may be proud because of his wealth, and insolent. His vision is crooked and he suspects everyone, thinking about his wealth being spent or destroyed. His heart and mouth dry up at the prospect. Not being able to find peace, he guards his wealth like an imp. After death, he becomes an imp, because earning, increase and protection of the wealth has led to an accumulation of sins. As an imp that seeks to seize wealth, he falls down into the hell known as Shuchi-mukha. [399] Like skilled tailors, Dharmaraja's servants stitch all the limbs on his body with thread.

'O lord of the earth! In this way, there are hundreds and thousands of hells in Yama's abode. All of them are for all those who follow the path of adharma. Some have been described and some have not been mentioned. Depending on the degree, all such people progressively enter there. After this world, those who follow dharma are again born in this world, when their good and bad deeds are exhausted. The attributes of the path of nivritti have been described towards the beginning. [400] These are the dimensions of the cosmic egg. The Puranas have thought of them as being divided into fourteen worlds. They have been described as the gross form of the great being himself, the illustrious Narayana. This form results from his own maya and gunas and has been narrated. If a person faithfully reads, hears, explains it to other people, or chants about the illustrious one, his intelligence becomes purified. Devotion and faith develop in him. He comprehends the paramatman, who is so very difficult to grasp. After having heard about the gross and subtle forms of the illustrious one, a person who has

controlled himself must concentrate on the gross form. When he has control over his atman, his intelligence will gradually convey him towards the subtle form. O king! I have thus described the earth, dvipas, varshas, rivers, mountains, the sky, oceans, nether regions, directions, hells, stellar and other regions to you. The gross form of the lord is extraordinary. He is the refuge for all the living creatures.'

This ends the Fifth Skandha.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Sixth Skandha

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Chapter 6(1)

Parikshit said, 'O illustrious one! Towards the beginning, [401] you have spoken about the path of nivritti. Through yoga, the brahman is gradually realized and samsara ceases. O sage! The characteristic of pravritti [402] is objectives that result from the three gunas. Therefore, one continues to be associ-

ated with the gunas of Prakriti and is born again and again. Many hells, characterized by adharma, have also been described. The first manvantara, of Svayambhuva, has also been described. You have described the lineages of Priyavrata and Uttanapada and their conduct, dvipas, varshas, oceans, mountains, rivers, gardens, trees, the location of the earth's globe and its divisions, attributes and measurements, the stellar regions and the nether regions, exactly as they were created by the lord. O immensely fortunate one! In hells, men face many terrible hardships. Now explain to me how they can avoid this.'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'When one commits a sin, in this world itself, a person must atone for it with thoughts, words and deeds. Otherwise, it is certain that after death, he will go to hell. I have already described to you the hardships one faces there. Therefore, before that happens, one must try to free oneself from those sins, before one is incapacitated by old age or death. This is just like a skilled physician diagnoses the gravity or lightness of a disease and identifies the medication.'

The king said, 'On the basis of what he has seen or heard, a person knows what is bad for himself. Nevertheless, he helplessly commits sin. How can there be atonement [403] if he keeps committing it? Sometimes, he refrains from sin. But sometimes, he commits it again. Therefore, like the washing of an elephant, [404] I think that atonement serves no purpose.'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'For a person who is ignorant, no act of atonement can completely counter something that has been done. That right of atonement is only for a person who possesses true knowledge. If a person eats wholesome food, a disease can be countered. O king! Similarly, by following the disciplines, one gradually becomes eligible for well-being. A fire destroys a clump of bamboos. Like that, austerities, brahmacharya, control of the mind, control of the senses, renunciation, truthfulness, purity, yama and *niyama* [405]—faithfully observed by patient people who know about dharma, can destroy the greatest of sins committed by thought, words or action. Some are only full of devotion and seek refuge with Vasudeva. All their sins are certainly destroyed, just as the sun dispels the mist. O king! A sinner is not purified by austerities and other things as much as a person

who has surrendered his life to Krishna, serving his devotees. In this world, that is the best and appropriate path, bringing freedom from fear. Well-behaved and virtuous people are found on that path, devoted to Narayana. O Indra among kings! Prayashchitta can be performed by a person who has withdrawn from Narayana. But he cannot be purified, any more than rivers can clean a pitcher that has been filled with liquor. Even if a person has surrendered himself to Krishna's lotus feet even once in this world, becoming attached to his qualities, he has certainly performed all acts of atonement. Even in his dream, he does not see Yama, or his servants, with nooses in their hands.

'In this connection, an ancient account is cited, about a conversation between the messengers of Vishnu and Yama. Listen to me. In Kanyakubja, there was a brahmana named Ajamila. He was the husband of a servant-maid. Because of the taint of being associated with a servant-maid, he deviated from his good conduct. He captured people for ransom, gambled, cheated, stole and resorted to other condemned means of conduct. He troubled other creatures. Through such impure means, he maintained his family. O king! He lived in this way, nurturing his sons. A long period of time passed and he was eighty-eight years old. This aged person had ten sons. The youngest child had the name of Narayana and his parents loved him a lot. Because this young child spoke in a lisping voice, the old man's heart was attached to him. He looked at his child's pastimes and was extremely happy. When he ate, he made the child eat. When he drank, he made the child drink. He was tied to the child in bonds of affection and the foolish person did not realize that the time of his death had arrived. The ignorant person continued in this way. When the time of his death arrived, he thought of the child, known as Narayana. He saw three extremely terrible men, with nooses in their hands. Their faces were twisted and their body hair stood up. They had come to take his atman away. Far away, he saw his child, known by the name of Narayana, playing. His senses were agitated and overwhelmed. He called out to him in a loud voice. Hari's name was chanted through the mouth of a dying person. O great king! On hearing the name of their master, his attendants suddenly arrived. Ajamila was the hus-

band of a servant-maid and Yama's messengers were about to take him [406] away from inside the heart. However, Vishnu's messengers energetically stopped them. When Vaivasvata's attendants were restrained, they asked, "Who are you, opposing us in this way? These are the orders of Dharmaraja. Whose servants are you? Where have you come from? Why are you restraining us? Are you gods or minor divinities? Are you prominent Siddhas? All of you have eyes that are like the petals of lotuses. You are attired in yellow silken garments. You wear diadems and earrings. Your garlands of lotus flowers are dazzling. All of you are young in age. All of you are beautiful and four-armed. You possess beautiful bows, quivers, swords, clubs, conch shells, chakras and lotuses. Through your own radiance, you have illuminated all the directions and destroyed the darkness. What is the reason behind your restraining the servants of the one who protects dharma?" Those who followed Vasudeva's commands were thus addressed by Yama's messengers.

'They laughed and replied in voices that rumbled like the thunder of clouds. Vishnu's messengers said, "If you indeed follow the commands of Dharmaraja, tell us the truth about dharma and the characteristics of adharma. How is punishment imposed? How does one obtain the desired objective? What deeds lead to men being punished? Are all deeds punished, or some of them?" Yama's messengers replied, "Dharma is what has been stated in the Vedas and adharma is anything that is contrary. We have heard that the Vedas manifested themselves from Narayana himself. He remains in his own abode. He is the one who has thought of these exact manifestations of sattva, rajas, tamas, gunas, names, actions and forms. Surya, Agni, the sky, the wind god, minor divinities, Soma, sandhya, day and night, the directions, water, land, Dharma himself—all of them witness what embodied beings do. Through these witnesses, adharma committed is known and the place for imposition of punishment determined. After considering all the deeds that have been committed, the appropriate punishment is imposed on the doer. O unblemished ones! In the case of auspicious acts, the determination is the opposite. The doer is attached to the gunas. No one with a body can avoid performing karma. Depending on the dharma or adharma that has

been performed in this world, in the next world, one enjoys the respective fruits. O best among divinities! Depending on the combination of the gunas, creatures perform three kinds of acts in this world. It can be inferred that this happens in subsequent worlds too. [407] This present period indicates the attributes of the ones that will precede and follow it. [408] In this way, the combination of dharma and adharma in the present birth indicates that in past and future existences. In his mind, the illustrious Aja [409] can visualize the future. Like that, the god resides in his city and through his mental powers, can visualize the past and future states. [410] A person submerged in darkness is ignorant and acts according to what is manifest. [411] He does not know about his past and future lives. When he is born, that memory is destroyed. He acts with the five organs of action and the five senses. He only knows the five objects of the senses. In addition, there is the sixteenth. [412] And there is the seventeenth, which is he himself. [413] With these, he experiences three kinds of states. [414] This linga sharira consists of sixteen parts and the three great potencies. [415] Based on these, a man is bound to samsara and undergoes joy, misery and fear. The embodied being is ignorant and has not been able to conquer the six categories. [416] Therefore, though he does not desire it, he undertakes acts. He is like a silkworm that envelopes itself inside a cocoon. Bewildered, he undertakes these acts. No one can remain alive for even an instant without performing acts. [417] The natural force of the gunas [418] incapacitate him and make him undertake these acts. It is the unmanifest [419] which is the cause and from that, one obtains the unmanifest and the manifest. [420] This is like the womb and like the seed, but it is nature which is the strongest. [421] This hardship faced by Purusha is because of association with Prakriti. However, if there is an association with the lord, this is dissipated within a short period of time. This one [422] was full of learning. He was a store of good conduct and qualities. He was firm in his vows, mild, self-controlled, truthful in speech and pure. He knew about the mantras. He was without ahamkara and served seniors, guests and the aged. He was fraternal towards all creatures. He was virtuous, restrained in speech and without jealousy. One day, acting according to the instructions of his father, this brahmana went to the forest. He collected fruits, flowers,

kindling and kusha grass and returned. At that time, he saw a lascivious shudra, along with a harlot. [423] They had drunk madhu and *maireya* [424] and because of the intoxication, their eyes rolled. She was shameless and her garment, loosened at the waist, had fallen down. They were sporting, singing and laughing, nearby. He saw her in this embrace of desire, her arms smeared with unguents. Suddenly infatuated, he succumbed and lost his heart. As he had heard and learnt, he tried to control himself. However, his mind was agitated by Madana and he was unable to restrain himself. The desire for her was like a demon and made him lose his senses. Thinking about her in his mind, he stopped following his own dharma. Whatever riches he had obtained from his father were expended on satisfying her carnal desires and on pleasing her in every way possible. The brahmana had married into a great lineage and his own wife was still young. However, the wicked one soon abandoned her, having been pierced by the glances of the svairini. [425] Thus, this condemned person did what he willed, transgressing the sacred texts. A long period of time elapsed and his life was spent on the impure and the unclean. Since he has sinned, we will convey him to the one who holds the rod in his hand. Since he has not atoned, he has to be purified through punishment."'

Chapter 6(2)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O king! The illustrious one's messengers heard what Yama's messengers told them. However, they were accomplished in debating and replied.

'Vishnu's messengers said, "Alas! This is a great pity. In this assembly, those who should know about dharma have been touched by adharma. That is the reason punishment is being imposed on the innocent. The punishment that is being levied is in vain. The protectors of subjects should be virtuous people who are impartial. Only then can they instruct about law. If there is partiality in them, where will subjects seek refuge? The acts of a superior person are emulated by those who are inferior. [426] Whatever they do be-

comes a yardstick and people follow that. A person places his head on his [427] lap and sleeps in peace. Like an animal, he himself does not know about dharma and adharma. Having trusted the friendship, he is unaware and completely surrenders himself. Since he is compassionate, he deserves to be trusted by all beings. Therefore, he should not cause pain. This one has atoned for sins that have been committed in one crore births. When he was helpless, for the sake of his benediction, he chanted Hari's name. Because of this, this sinner has certainly completely atoned for all his sins. He has uttered the four aksharas [428] of 'Narayana'. [429] When Vishnu's name is uttered, his [430] attention is drawn towards the speaker. A thief, a drunkard, a person who betrays his friend, the killer of a brahmana, a person who has intercourse with his preceptor's wife, a person who kills a woman, a king, a father or a cow and all other kinds of sinners—perform excellent atonement for all their sins in this way. Those who know about the Vedas have spoken about many kinds of purification for sins, vows and other things. However, the atonement that comes through chanting Hari's name, which reminds one of Uttamashloka's qualities, is superior. After performing an act of atonement, if the mind again rushes along a wicked path, then it has been incomplete. For those who desire to eliminate all acts, [431] the constant chanting of Hari's qualities is the only way, since it cleanses the mind. When he was about to die, he uttered the illustrious one's name completely. He has already cleansed himself of all his sins. Therefore, do not take him away. The knowledgeable say that if Vaikuntha's name is chanted, even if it is to address someone else, in jest, in the process of reciting something or negligently, it destroys sins. Thus, if a man accidentally chants Hari's name while he is falling down, while he stumbles, when he is maimed, scorched, bitten or injured, he does not deserve hardships. Maharshis who know have prescribed heavy and light prayashchitta for heavy and light sins. Those sins are purified through austerities, donations, vows and other things. But these do not destroy the adharma in the heart. That only comes about by serving at his feet. Whether Uttamashloka's name is chanted consciously or inadvertently, a man's sins are burnt down, the way a fire burns down kin-

dling. A powerful medicine, even if it is inadvertently imbibed, reveals its potency. This is true of the chanting of a mantra too."'

Shri-Shuka said, 'O king! They thus truly explained the nature of dharma towards the illustrious one. They freed the brahmana from Yama's noose and saved him from death. O destroyer of enemies! When Yama's messengers had thus been repulsed, they went to Yama's presence and told Yamaraja everything that had happened. When he had been freed from the noose, the brahmana lost his fear and regained his old nature. Delighted at the sight of Vishnu's servants, he bowed his head down and worshipped them. The servants of the great being saw that he wished to speak. O unblemished one! Therefore, while he looked on, they instantly vanished from the spot. Ajamila had heard the conversation between the messengers of Yama and Krishna, about the pure nature of dharma in the three Vedas, based on the illustrious one, the store of qualities. Having heard about Hari's greatness, he instantly became devoted to the illustrious one. Remembering the wicked deeds he had committed, he felt great repentance. "Alas! I could not conquer myself and suffered this great hardship. By having sons through a vrishala lady, I have destroyed my status as a brahmana. Shame on me. I will be condemned by virtuous people. I have committed evil deeds. I am a taint on my family. Abandoning my young and chaste wife, I went to a wicked woman who was a drunkard. My parents were old and without a protector. They were without relatives and ascetics. Alas! Like an ungrateful and inferior person, I have deserted them. It is evident that I will fall down into an extremely terrible hell. There, lascivious people who destroy dharma suffer hardships from Yama. I witnessed a great wonder. Was it a dream or was it real? With nooses in their hands, there were those who sought to drag me away. Where have they gone now? There were four handsome ones who released me when I was bound with nooses and was being taken down to the nether regions. Where have they gone? Despite my misfortune, those learned ones must have seen something auspicious in me. Why else have they shown me their favours? I was the impure husband of a vrishala lady and was about to die. Why else did I deserve to chant Vaikuntha's name through my tongue? I was a gambler, wicked, shameless and the

slayer of brahmanas. How could I have uttered the illustrious Narayana's auspicious name? I will now endeavour to control my mind, senses and the breath of life, so that I no longer submerge myself into blinding darkness. I will free myself from all the bonds of ignorance and desire and desire for acts. I will be a well-wisher towards all beings, friendly, compassionate and in control of my atman. I will free myself from the demon in the form of a woman, which was nothing but the illustrious one's maya. I was evil and it played with me, like with a domesticated deer. I will give up physical notions of 'I' and 'mine' and the false pursuit of material objects. Hearing and chanting about the illustrious one, I will use my intelligence to focus my mind on him." In this way, through a brief association with virtuous people, he lost all sense of attachment. He freed himself from all bonds and went to Gangadvara. [432] In that abode of the divinity, he seated himself in yoga. He withdrew all the aggregate of the senses and immersed his mind in the atman. Having detached himself from the gunas, he immersed himself in meditation. He submerged his atman in the refuge that is the illustrious one, who is thought of as the brahman. When his intelligence was thus fixed, before him, he saw the beings whom he had seen earlier. The brahmana recognized them as the ones he had met earlier. He bowed his head down and worshipped them. Once he had seen them, he gave up his body in that tirtha on the Ganga. He immediately assumed a form that was appropriate for someone who was the illustrious one's attendant. Along with the servants of the great being, the brahmana ascended a golden vimana and travelled to the spot where Shri's consort was. He had given up all kinds of dharma. He had become the husband of a servant-maid. He had fallen down and been engaged in reprehensible deeds. With his vows destroyed, he was going to be hurled into hell. However, having chanted the illustrious one's name, he was instantly liberated. For those desiring liberation, there is no better way to sever the bondage of deeds, than chanting about the one whose feet are a tirtha. Thereby, the mind does not get attached to deeds again. There is no contamination through rajas, tamas, or anything else. This is an extremely secret ancient account that destroys sins, for all those who listen to it with faith, or chant it with devotion. Such a person does not go to hell and

Yama's servants do not look at him. However inauspicious he may have been in the mortal world, he obtains greatness in Vishnu's world. While he was dying, addressing his son, Ajamila chanted Hari's name and went to that abode, not to speak of those who chant it with devotion.'

Chapter 6(3)

The king asked, 'The god Dharmaraja heard what his own servants described. Everyone is under his subjugation. What did he say to them in reply? His commands were defied by Murari's servants. O rishi! The violation of the god Yama's punishment has never been heard of earlier. How can this happen? O sage! This will remain a doubt among people. It is my firm view that no one other than you can clear this up.'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'O king! The efforts of Yama's servants were countered by those of the illustrious one. They went and informed Yama, the lord of Samyamini.

'Yama's messengers said, "O lord! In the world of the living, how many controllers are there, who apportion out fruits, depending on the threefold [433] nature of deeds? In the world, if there are many controllers who exert the rod, who is the one who will determine death and who is the one who will determine immortality? There are indeed many people who perform deeds. However, if there are many controllers, that will be like a circle of controllers engaged in acting. [434] Therefore, you alone are the lord of creatures and the lord over everyone. You are the controller, the one who exercises the rod of punishment. You are the one who decides on good and bad deeds committed by men. However, the punishment ordained by you is no longer being observed in the world now. It has been countered by four extraordinary masters of siddhi. Following your command, we were conveying a sinner to a chamber meant for hardships. But they forcibly severed the nooses and freed him. If you think we are worthy, we wish to know about this. When 'Narayana' was uttered, they quickly arrived, exclaiming, 'Do not be afraid.'"'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'Yama, the god who controls subjects, was thus asked by his own messengers and was delighted. He remembered Hari's lotus feet and replied.

'Yama said, "The lord of mobile and immobile objects is different from me. Like the warp and woof of a piece of cloth, the universe is woven into him. [435] Creation, preservation and destruction takes place from his portions. As if with a rope through the noose, the worlds are under his control. The people who are addressed by different names have emanated from him. They are bound to him with cords, like bulls with ropes. They are bound and scared. With different names and deeds, they bear the burden and offer sacrifices to him. I, the great Indra, Nirriti, Prachetas, [436] Soma, Agni, Isha, Pavana, Virinchi, the Adityas, the Vishvadevas, the Vasus, the Sadhyas, the large number of Maruts, the large number of Rudras, the Siddhas, all the other creators of the universe, [437] the lords of the immortals and Bhrigu and the others who are not touched by rajas and tamas—are touched by his maya and do not understand his activities. Nor do those who are full of sattva. What can one say of others? Those who possess the breath of life cannot comprehend him through the senses, the mind, the breath of life, the heart or words, though he is the atman who exists in their atmans, in the inner recesses of the heart. This is like the forms of the body not being able to see the eye, which is beyond them. Hari is the lord who controls himself. The great-souled one is supreme and is the lord of maya. With agreeable forms, qualities and natures, like him, his messengers generally wander around. These creatures of Vishnu are worshipped by the gods. They are extremely wonderful and their manifestations can rarely be seen. They protect mortal devotees of the illustrious one from others, from me and from everyone else. Dharma has been enunciated by the illustrious one himself and is not known by the rishis, the gods, the best among the Siddhas, asuras and men, not to speak of vidyadharas and charanas. O servants! Svayambhu, Narada, Shambhu, Kumara, [438] Kapila, Manu, Prahlada, Janaka, Bhishma, Bali, Vyasa's son [439] and I—the twelve of us know about the illustrious one's dharma. It is pure and mysterious, difficult to comprehend. A person who knows it, obtains immortality. In this world, there exists a supreme dharma

for men. Beginning with chanting, it consists of bhakti yoga towards the illustrious one. O sons! Behold the greatness that results from chanting Hari's name. Even someone like Ajamila has been freed from the noose of death. This is sufficient for destroying all the sins of men—chanting the illustrious one's qualities, deeds and names. While he was dying, the sinner Ajamila addressed his son by the name 'Narayana' and achieved liberation. Even great beings do not generally know this. The divinity is the abode of maya and their intelligence is confounded because of this. Their intelligence has been numbed by the sweet and flowery pronouncements of the three. [440] Therefore, they engage themselves in the great rites mentioned in the sacred texts. Indeed, having considered this, those with excellent intelligence resort to devoted yoga towards the illustrious Ananta, with all their souls. Therefore, such people do not deserve to be punished. Even if they sin, those are destroyed through such chanting. Those who chant his sacred account are divinities and Siddhas. Having sought refuge with the illustrious one, those virtuous ones are impartial in their outlook. They are protected by Hari's club and one should not approach them. We and our rod of punishment have no influence over them. Bring before me wicked ones who have turned away from Mukunda and from the sweet fragrance of his lotus feet. This is incessantly tasted by paramahamsas who are attached to nothing else. Bind and bring those who are thirsty for household objects and follow a path that leads to hell. Bring before me those whose tongues do not chant the illustrious one's qualities and names and those whose minds do not remember his lotus feet, those who never bow their heads down before Krishna and those wicked ones who do not render service to Vishnu. May the illustrious and ancient being, Narayana, pardon me for the offence that I and my servants have caused. My servants did not know. We join our hands in salutation. We bow down before the great being and lord and beg forgiveness."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'The chanting of Vishnu's name is therefore beneficial for the world. O Kouravya! Know that it is the ultimate atonement and destroys the greatest of sins. If one repeatedly hears and chants about Hari's valour, great devotion results and the mind is purified, much more than

through vows and other things. A person who has tasted the honey of Krishna's lotus feet renounces the qualities of maya and no longer finds delight in other objects that lead to hardships. It is others who are struck by desire and, because they are tainted by this dirt, seek to cleanse it through beneficial rites. However, the dirt touches them again. This glory of the illustrious one was explained to Yama's servants by their own master. Remembering this, their minds were astounded. O king! They are scared of a person who seeks refuge with Achyuta. Therefore, since that day, they are terrified of even looking at such people. The illustrious one who was born from a pot [441] recited this secret history to me, while he was seated on Malaya, worshipping Hari.'

Chapter 6(4)

The king said, 'You have briefly described the gods, asuras, men, nagas, animals and birds created during Svayambhuva manvantara. O illustrious one! I wish to know about this in detail, about the subsequent creations that the supreme and illustrious one brought about and about their powers.'

Suta [442] said, 'Badarayana's son heard this excellent question asked by the royal sage. Welcoming this, the great yogi, supreme among sages, replied.'

Shri-Shuka said, 'The ten Prachetas were the sons of Prachinabarhi. Emerging from inside the ocean, they saw that the earth was covered with trees. Kindled by their austerities, their anger and intolerance at the trees flared up. Desiring to burn those down, they created wind and fire from their mouths. O extender of the Kuru lineage! On seeing that these were being burnt down, the great king, Soma, tried to pacify their anger. "O immensely fortunate ones! You should not burn down these miserable trees. You are known as the protectors of subjects and should ensure their increase. The illustrious Hari, without decay, is the lord of Prajapatis. The lord created trees and herbs as food. Immobile objects are food for those that move, those without feet are food for those who possess feet. Those

without hands are food for those without hands, those with four feet are food for bipeds. O unblemished ones! Your father, and the god of the gods, instructed you to create subjects. How can you burn down the trees? Resort to the path of the virtuous and control the rage that has been ignited. This was the path followed by your father, grandfather and great grandfather. Parents are friends for children, the eyelashes for the eyes, the husband for a woman, the king for subjects, householders for mendicants and the learned are well-wishers for the ignorant. The lord Hari, the atman, dwells inside the bodies of beings. Everything is his abode. If you consider this, he will be satisfied. If a person desires to know about the atman, he should control the sudden eruption of powerful rage within the space in the heart. He will then be able to transcend the gunas. Enough of this burning down of the miserable trees. Let the remaining ones be safe. There is this excellent maiden [443] who has been reared by the trees. Accept her as your wife." O king! This extremely beautiful maiden was the daughter of an apsara. King Soma bestowed her on them and returned. Following dharma, they married her.

'Daksha, the son of the Prachetas, was born through her. The three worlds are populated with the offspring that he created. Daksha was devoted to his daughters. Listen attentively to how he created creatures through his semen and through his mind. In the beginning, this Prajapati created subjects through his mind—gods, asuras, men and others who reside in the sky, on earth and in water. Prajapati saw that this creation of subjects was not increasing. He went to the foothills of the Vindhyas and performed extremely difficult austerities. There was a supreme tirtha named Aghamarshana there and it destroyed sins. He bathed thrice a day and satisfied Hari with his austerities. He satisfied the illustrious Adhokshaja with *hamsaguhya*. [444] I will now explain to you how Hari was satisfied.

'Prajapati said, "I bow down before the supreme one whose powers are real. He is the controller of living beings, manifested in the three gunas. His abode cannot be perceived by those whose intelligence seeks truth in the gunas. I worship the self-created one who is beyond everything. He is the friend of a being, but the being does not know this friend, just as an object

of the senses doesn't perceive the sense organ. With the being, this friend resides in the same city. [445] He is a witness to everything that is manifest. I bow down before that great lord. This body, the breath of life, the senses, the mind, the elements and the tanmatras [446] do not know themselves, or anything that exists beyond them. All living beings only know about the gunas, but do not know the omniscient and infinite one. I worship him. When there is a cessation of the mind and names and forms no longer exist because the senses and memory are destroyed, his transcendental form is alone perceived. I bow down to the pure one. His abode is the pure heart. Learned ones perceive him located in the inner cores of their hearts, even though, enveloped by the three gunas and his nine powers. [447] Just as the fire latent in wood is drawn out, learned people draw out the fifteenth. [448] His maya is infinite and varied and comes in the way of realizing emancipation and experiencing bliss. All the names are his and the universe is his form. I do not possess the capacity to describe this. Let him show me his favours. Anything spoken in words, anything determined by the intelligence, the senses or the mind is not the way he is. That is not his true form. He is the cause of gunas and forms. He is behind the creation, appearance and destruction of the gunas. Everything rests in him. Everything results from him. Everything belongs to him. Everything is rendered to him. Everything executed is for him. Every action is done by him. He is the supreme cause behind cause and effect. He is the original and famous one. He is the brahman. He alone, and no one else, is the cause behind everything. Those who speak talk about his potencies and indulge in disputes and agreements. They repeatedly delude themselves. I bow down before the lord who is infinite in his qualities. He exists. He does not exist. He is the single one. Professing faith in what they know, people follow different and contrary kinds of dharma. Some perceive him through samkhya, or yoga. He is the identical being, supreme and great. May he be favourable towards me. May he show favours towards those who worship at his feet. The illustrious one is infinite and is beyond names and forms. He manifests himself through names, forms, births and deeds. May he be supremely favourable towards me. There are ordinary people who follow different paths of knowl-

edge. According to their wishes, he manifests himself in different embodied forms. This is like the wind bearing the qualities of the earth. [449] Let the lord fulfil my desires."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'O best among the Kuru lineage! The illustrious one was thus praised. Devoted to his devotees and praised, he manifested himself in Aghamarshana. His feet were astride Suparna and his eight and mighty arms wielded a chakra, a conch shell, a sword, a shield, arrows, a bow, a noose and a club. He was attired in yellow garments and his complexion was as dark as a cloud. His face and glance were pleasant. A garland of wild flowers hung down from his body and the shrivatsa mark and Koustubha were radiant. He was adorned with an expensive diadem and bracelets and his radiant earrings were shaped like makaras. He was adorned with a girdle, finger rings, bracelets, anklets and armlets. On seeing this great and wonderful form, Prajapati was initially scared. However, delighted in his mind, he prostrated himself on the ground, like a rod. Because of his great joy, he was unable to say anything. It was as if a waterfall had flooded the lakes in his mind and senses. Prajapati, the devotee, was prostrate, desiring subjects. Janardana, who knows what is in the hearts of all creatures, spoke to him.

'The illustrious one said, "O Prachetas! O immensely fortunate one! Your austerities have been successful. Because of your great devotion and attachment towards me, you have obtained supreme success. O lord of subjects! I am pleased with you. You have performed austerities for the growth of the world. I also desire that there should be an increase in the number and prosperity of beings. Brahma, Bhava, all of you, [450] the Manus and the lords among the gods have the prosperity of creatures in mind and are indeed my manifestations. O brahmana! Austerities represent my heart, and knowledge about specific rites represents my body and form. Completed sacrifices represent my limbs. Dharma represents my atman, and the gods are my breath of life. I alone existed at the beginning. [451] There was nothing else, inside or outside. I was unmanifest consciousness, and the entire universe was asleep. I am infinite in qualities. I am infinite in qualities and an accumulation of qualities. It is from me that Svayambhu Aja was generated in the beginning.

His potency increased because of my energy. Though he exerted himself in tasks of creation, he felt himself to be inadequate. Instructed by me, that god tormented himself through terrible austerities. After this, in the beginning, the lord, the creator of the universe, created the nine of you. O dear one! Prajapati Panchajana's daughter is named Asikni. O lord of subjects! Accept her as your wife. Follow the dharma of intercourse and again embark upon the creation of subjects. She will also follow the dharma of intercourse and you will be able to create large numbers. From you, because of my maya, all subjects will henceforth be created through intercourse. They will offer sacrifices to me."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'While he looked on, the illustrious creator of the universe said this. After this, like something seen in a dream, Hari instantly vanished from that spot.'

Chapter 6(5)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Imbibed with Vishnu's maya, through Panchajana's daughter, the lord had ten thousand sons known as the Haryashvas. O king! All those sons of Daksha were identical in good conduct and in the pursuit of dharma. Commanded by their father to create subjects, they headed for the western direction. They went to the tirtha known as Narayana-saras, at a place where the Sindhu meets the ocean. A large number of sages and Siddhas frequented the spot. From merely touching those waters, all their stores of impurities were cleansed. Their intelligence was imbibed with the dharma followed by paramahamsas. Controlled by their father's instruction to increase subjects, they performed fierce austerities. The *devarshi* [452] saw them. He told them, "O Haryashvas! How can you possibly create subjects? Although you are protectors, you have not seen the ends of the earth and are foolish. There is a kingdom with a single man. There is a hole whose exit cannot be seen. There is a woman who assumes many kinds of forms. There is a man who is the husband of a harlot. There is a river that flows in both directions. There is an extraordinary house that is made out of twenty-five

materials. There is a swan with a wonderful tale. There is a disc made out of razors and it revolves on its own. Your learned father has commanded you, but you are ignorant. Without understanding what is appropriate for you, how can you possibly create?" Hearing these words, the intelligence of the Haryashvas was awakened. The words of the devarshi were mysterious and using their natural intelligence, they examined them. The earth is the field and is known as *jiva*. But it is actually without a beginning and binds itself down in this way. Without having witnessed its emancipation, why should one indulge in acts that are transient? [453] The single being is the lord. The illustrious one is supreme and his own refuge. He is the fourth. [454] If that being without an origin has not been seen, why should one indulge in acts that are transient? If a man goes to heaven, this is like a hole from which one returns to this world. [455] Without realizing the transcendental abode, why should one indulge in acts that are transient? A being's intelligence has many different kinds of forms and possesses the gunas of a wanton woman. In this world, without that attachment ending, why should one indulge in acts that are transient? By being attached to her, who is like a wicked wife, one loses all one's powers and roams around in samsara. If a person does not comprehend the progress of this folly, why should he indulge in acts that are transient? Maya leads to creation and destruction and powerful in its force, flows along the banks towards the end. Maddened by it, why should one indulge in acts that are transient? Purusha is the wonderful mirror, consisting of twenty-five *tattva*s. [456] Without understanding about adhyatma, why should one indulge in acts that are transient? The sacred texts instruct about the lord, who enables one to give up bondage and obtain emancipation. Neglecting this and without being able to discriminate between the real and the unreal, why should one indulge in acts that are transient? [457] The fierce wheel of time revolves independently and attracts everything in the universe. Without understanding this, how can one indulge in acts that are transient? How can a person not understand the father's instructions, which are in conformity with the sacred texts? How can one not follow them, becoming entangled in this act, [458] which is immersed in the three gunas? O king! Unanimously, the Haryashvas determined this.

After circumambulating him, they left along the path from which there is no return. The sage continued to roam around the worlds, fixing his undivided mind on Hrishikesha's lotus feet and chanting the tune of the brahman.

'Daksha's excellent sons were good in conduct and were destroyed because they listened to Narada. On hearing this, he was tormented. Even excellent sons can lead to grief. Having been comforted by Aja, [459] Daksha again had one thousand sons through Panchajana's daughter and they were known as the Sabalashvas. Firm in their vows, they were instructed by their father to create subjects. They went to Narayana-saras, where their elder brothers had become Siddhas. As soon as they touched those waters, they were cleansed of their store of impurities. There, they chanted the name of the supreme brahman and tormented themselves through great austerities. For some months, they only drank water. For some months, they only subsisted on air. Using this mantra, they worshipped the lord of mantras. "Oum! We bow down to Narayana, the great atman and being. He is pure sattva and consciousness. We meditate on the great and pure one." O Indra among kings! Their minds were also on creating subjects and the sage Narada approached them. As before, he addressed them in those mysterious words. "O sons of Daksha! Listen to my words of instruction. You are devoted to your brothers. Therefore, you must search out the footprints of your brothers. A brother who knows about dharma must generally follow his brother. A man who has pious relatives finds delight with the Maruts." The sighting of Narada does not fail. Having spoken to them in this way, he departed. O noble one! They too followed the path traversed by their brothers. They travelled along the virtuous and superior path towards the supreme. Like a night that has headed west, [460] they have still not returned. At this time, Prajapati saw many evil portents. As was the case earlier, he heard that Narada had caused the destruction of his sons. Senseless with grief on account of his sons, he became angry with Narada. He approached the devarshi and his lips quivered in rage. Daksha said, "You are wicked, though you are in the garb of the virtuous. To us, you bear the signs of someone who is virtuous. However, you have committed an evil act towards my sons. You have shown them the path of a mendicant. They have

not considered karma and have not repaid the three debts. [461] O wicked one! You have deprived them of benefit, both in this world and in the next. Your mind is fixed on being merciless towards children. You shamelessly roam around in assemblies, destroying his [462] fame. Those who are devoted to the illustrious one are always eager to show favours towards creatures. You are the sole exception. You destroy friendship and create enmity among those who are not enemies. Detachment among men cannot be brought about in this way. Your knowledge is false. You think that renunciation can be brought about by severing the bonds of affection. If a man does not himself experience the sharp pain that material objects bring, he does not develop non-attachment, not by learning from the intelligence of others. We are virtuous people who wish to follow the karma meant for householders. However, you have caused us an irreparable damage and it cannot be tolerated. You have severed my bonds and you have acted in that inauspicious way again. [463] O foolish one! Therefore, you will roam around the worlds and not find a place to rest." Narada, revered by the virtuous, accepted this and agreed. He is spoken of as a virtuous person. Though he possessed the powers himself, [464] he tolerated it.'

Chapter 6(6)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Entreated by Svayambhuva, Prachetas had sixty daughters through Asikni and they were devoted to their father. He bestowed ten daughters on Dharma, thirteen on Ka, [465] twenty-seven on the moon god, two each on Bhuta, Angiras and Krishashva and the remainder on Tarkshya. [466] Hear from me their names and those of their offspring. Their offspring and the descendants of their offspring populated the three worlds. Dharma's wives were Bhanu, Lamba, Kakub, Jami, Vishva, Sadhya, Marutvati, Vasu, Muhurta and Sankalpa. Hear about their sons. O king! Devarishabha was born from Bhanu and his son was Indrasena. Lamba's son was Vidyota and the clouds [467] were born from him. Kakub's son was Sankata and the forts on earth were born from him. [468] Svarga was the son of Jami and his son

was Nandi. The sons of Vishva were known as the Vishvadevas and they did not have any offspring. Sadhya gave birth to the large number of Sadhyas and their son was Arthasiddhi. Marutvati's sons were Jayanta and Marutvan. Jayanta was a portion of Vasudeva, whom learned ones know as Upendra. The large number of divinities known as Mouhurtikas were born from Muhurta. At the right time, they bestow fruits on living beings. Sankalpa was born from Sankalpa. [469] It is said that Kama was Sankalpa's son. Vasu had eight sons, the Vasus. Hear about their names—Drona, Prana, Dhruva, Arka, Agni, Dosha, Vastu and Vibhavasu. Through his wife, Abhimati, Drona had sons—Harsha, Shoka, Bhaya and others. Urjasvati, Prana's wife, had the sons Saha, Ayus and Purojava. Dhruva's wife was Dharani and she had the many different cities as her sons. [470] Arka's wife was Vasana and her sons are known as Tarsha and others. Dhara was the wife of the Vasu known as Agni and her sons were Dravinaka and others. Skanda was the son of Krittika [471] and his sons were Vishakha and others. Through Sharvari, Dosha had a son named Shishumara, who was Hari's portion. Through Angirasi, Vastu had Vishvakarma as a son, and he was the husband of Akriti. Chakshusha Manu was born through her. Manu's sons were the Vishvadevas and the Sadhyas. [472] Through Usha, Vibhavasu had the sons Vyushta, Rochisha and Atapa. Panchayama was born from Atapa. He keeps beings awake and makes them undertake activities.

'Sarupa, Bhuta's wife, had one crore Rudras as sons. The foremost were Raivata, Aja, Bhava, Bhima, Vama, Ugra, Vrishakapi, Ajaikapada, Ahirbudhnya, Bahurupa and Mahan. [473] The other terrible companions of the Rudras were the leaders of bhutas and pretas.

'Svadha, the wife of Prajapati Angiras, gave birth to the ancestors. Sati, another wife of Angiras, accepted the Atharva Veda as her son.

'Through his wife Archi, Krishashva had Dhumrakesha as a son and through his wife Dhishana, he had the sons Vedashira, Devala, Vayuna and Manu.

'Tarkshya's wives were Vinata, Kadru, Patangi and Yamini. [474] Patangi gave birth to birds and Yamini to locusts. Suparna's [475] son was Garuda,

who bore the lord of sacrifices himself. She had another son, Anuru, [476] who was Surya's charioteer. Kadru had many nagas as her sons.

'O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Krittika and the other nakshatras were wives of the moon god. Because of Daksha's curse, he could not have offspring. [477] He was afflicted by the demon of pulmonary consumption. However, having pacified him again, Soma got his kalas back, which waned.

'Now hear about the auspicious names of the mothers of the world. [478] The entire universe was born from Kashyapa's wives—Aditi, Diti, Danu, Kashtha, Arishta, Surasa, Ila, Muni, Krodhavasha, Tamra, Surabhi, Sarama and Timi. [479] Aquatic creatures were born from Timi and carnivorous creatures were Sarama's sons. O king! Buffaloes, cows and others with cloven hooves were born from Surabhi. Hawks, vultures and others were born from Tamra. The large number of apsaras were born from Muni. O king! Snakes like the dandashukas were the sons of Krodhavasha. Trees and plants were born from Ila, the yatudhanas [480] were born from Surasa. Gandharvas were born from Arishta and animals with uncloven hooves from Kashtha. Danu had sixty-one sons. Hear the names of the most important ones—Dvimurdha, Shambara, Arishta, Hayagriva, Vibhavasu, Ayomukha, Shankushira, Svarbhanu, Kapila, Aruna, Puloma, Vrishaparva, Ekachakra, Anutapana, Dhumrakesha, Virupaksha, Viprachitti and Durjaya. Svarbhanu's daughter was Suprabha and she married Namuchi. Yayati, Nahusha's powerful son, married Sharmishtha, Vrishaparva's daughter. Vaishvanara [481] had four beautiful daughters—Upadanavi, Hayashira, Puloma and Kalaka. O king! Upadanavi was married to Hiranyaksha and Hayashira to Kratu. Ka [482] married Puloma and Kalaka, two of Vaishvanara's daughters. The illustrious Kashyapa married them because he was instructed to do this by Brahma. The danavas Poulama and Kalakeyas [483] were accomplished in battle. O king! Among these, sixty thousand destroyed sacrifices and were killed by your grandfather single-handedly, when he visited heaven and wished to do what would bring Indra pleasure. [484] Through his wife Simhika, Viprachitti had one hundred and one sons. Rahu was the eldest and the other hundred are the Ketus. All of them became planets. Now hear progressively about

Aditi's lineage. Through his portion, the lord and god, Narayana, himself descended there—Vivasvat, Aryama, Pusha, Tvashta, Savita, Bhaga, Dhatri, Vidhatri, Varuna, Mitra, Shatru and Urukrama. [485] Through Samjna, Vivasvat had the son, Manu Shraddhadeva, and an immensely fortunate couple of twins, Yama and Yami. Thereafter, Samjna became a mare on earth and gave birth to the two Nasatyas. [486] Through Chhaya, he had Shanaishchara and Savarni Manu as sons. The daughter was Tapati, who accepted Samvarana as a husband. Matrika was the wife of Aryama and their sons were the Charshanis. Brahma thought of them as a species from which humankind would evolve. Pusha didn't have offspring. Since his teeth were shattered earlier, he only eats flour. That was because he exhibited his teeth and laughed, when he [487] was angry with Daksha. The maiden known as Rachana was the daughter of the Daityas [488] and she was Tvashta's wife. Through them were born Samnivesha and the valiant Vishvarupa. The gods accepted him, though he was the son of the daughter of their enemies. [489] This was when they were abandoned by their preceptor, Angiras, [490] because they had shown him disrespect.'

Chapter 6(7)

The king asked, 'Why were the gods abandoned by their own preceptor? What offence did they commit against their preceptor? O illustrious one! Please tell me this.'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'Intoxicated by his prosperity over the three worlds, Indra deviated from the virtuous path. O king! He was surrounded by the Maruts, the Vasus, the Rudras, the Adityas, the Ribhus, the Vishvadevas, the Sadhyas and the Nasatyas. Maghavan was tended to and served by Siddhas, charanas, gandharvas, sages, those who knew about the brahman, vidyadharas, apsaras, kinnaras, birds and serpents. Melodious songs were sung before him. He was seated on a throne and a white umbrella that was as beautiful as the lunar disc was held atop his head. There were other signs of an emperor, whisk and fans. Poulami [491] was seated on half of his excel-

lent seat. When the great preceptor of the gods and of himself arrived, he did not arise and show him respect. Nor did he offer him a seat. Vachaspati [492] is a supreme sage and is revered by the gods and the asuras. However, despite seeing that he had arrived, Indra did not arise from his seat. The wise lord, descended from the Angiras lineage, was silent. He quickly left and returned to his own house, knowing that this transgression resulted from the arrogance of prosperity. It was then that Indra realized he had shown disrespect to his preceptor. In the presence of everyone present in that assembly, he reprimanded himself. "Alas! I have perpetrated a wicked act. My intelligence was weak. In the insolence caused by prosperity, the preceptor has been dishonoured in an assembly. No learned person will desire the prosperity of the lord of the gods if that conveys the lord of the gods to sentiments like those of the asuras, as has happened now. There are those who say that an emperor must never arise from the throne on which he is seated. However, they do not know about supreme dharma. Their wicked path leads to calamity and one falls down into darkness. Those who heed their words sink, like boats made out of stone. The brahmana is the preceptor of the immortals and his knowledge is fathomless. Without any deceit, I will bow my head down and touch his feet, thus obtaining his favours." Maghavan thought in this way. However, the illustrious Brihaspati left his house. Using the maya of adhyatma, he vanished. The illustrious and self-ruling one searched everywhere to determine where his preceptor had gone. Surrounded by the gods, he used his intelligence to meditate. But he couldn't find any peace for himself. All the asuras heard this and followed the advice of Ushanas. [493] They were extremely difficult to vanquish and they attacked the gods, wishing to kill them. The sharp arrows released by them pierced the thighs and arms of the gods. With Indra and with their heads lowered, they went and sought refuge with Brahma.

'The illustrious and self-creating one saw them stationed there, afflicted. The god was overcome with great compassion and addressed them in comforting words. Brahma said, "Alas! O best among the gods! You have committed an extremely inauspicious deed. The brahmana is controlled and the brahman is in him. Because of your prosperity, you did not honour him. O

gods! You were prosperous and your own enemies were feeble. However, because of your ingratitude, you have been defeated by the enemy. O Maghavan! Look at your enemies. They decayed because they crossed their preceptor. But they are powerful now because they again faithfully worshipped Kavya. Those who follow that divine one from the Bhrigu lineage can take away my abode too. They have been instructed by the descendant of the Bhrigu lineage in accomplishing their objectives, and their intentions are not obvious. Why will they care for heaven? Lords of men who worship brahmanas, Govinda and cattle never face anything inauspicious. Therefore, quickly worship the brahmana Vishvarupa. He is the ascetic son of Tvashta and is self-controlled. When worshipped by you, he will accomplish your objectives, as long as you can forget his acts." [494] O king! Thus advised by Brahma, they lost their anxiety.

'They went to the rishi who was Tvashta's son and embraced him. They said the following. The gods said, "May you be fortunate. We have come to your hermitage as guests. O son! [495] We are like your fathers and it is appropriate that you should accomplish our desire. O brahmana! The supreme dharma for a virtuous son is to serve his parents and this is especially true of one who is a brahmachari. A preceptor is the embodied form of the Vedas. A father is the embodied form of Prajapati. A brother is the embodied form of the lord of the Maruts. [496] A mother is the form of the earth. A sister is the embodied form of compassion. A guest is the embodied form of Dharma himself. A visitor is the embodied form of Agni. [497] All beings are the embodied form of the atman. Having been defeated by the enemy, your fathers are distressed and afflicted. O son! Using your austerities, you should follow our wishes and dispel these. You are a brahmana and the brahman is in you. We choose you as our teacher and preceptor. Through your energy, we will then be able to easily defeat our enemies. O brahmana! If one worships the feet of a younger person to accomplish an objective, that is not condemned. Learning is not determined on the basis of seniority in age alone." The great ascetic was invited by the large number of gods to become their priest. Vishvarupa was delighted and addressed them in gentle words. Vishvarupa replied, "Those who know the good conduct of dharma

have condemned this. [498] It diminishes the powers of brahmacharya. O lords! A person like me, who should be a disciple, has been requested by the lords of the worlds. Therefore, I cannot refuse. That is in my own selfish interest too. O lords! I survive on leftover grain and wealth is nothing to me. I have withdrawn from all virtuous rites. [499] O lords! How can I undertake the reprehensible task of becoming a priest? That only appeals to those who are evil in intelligence. Nevertheless, I cannot refuse that desired by my seniors. At the cost of my life and everything I possess, I will accomplish what you wish." Vishvarupa, the great ascetic, promised them this. With supreme meditation, he performed the task of being a priest. The prosperity of the enemies of the gods was protected through the knowledge of Ushanas. Using the Vaishnava knowledge, the lord took it away and handed it over to the great Indra. This protected the one with one thousand eyes and the lord defeated the army of the asuras. Vishvarupa, generous in his intelligence, told the great Indra about this.'

Chapter 6(8)

The king said, 'Protected by this, the one with one thousand eyes toyed with the enemy soldiers and vanquished them. He enjoyed the prosperity of the three worlds. O illustrious one! Tell me about this armour, which has Narayana inside it. [500] Protected by this, he defeated the enemy assassins in the battle.'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'Once Tvashta's son had been chosen as the priest, the great Indra asked him about this. This is the armour that goes by Narayana's name. Hear it single-mindedly. Vishvarupa said, "A person must wash his hands and feet and perform the ablutions. He must wear a ring made out of kusha grass and be seated, facing the north. Controlling his speech, he must purify his limbs with the two mantras. [501] When there is fear, he must don this supreme armour of Narayana's—the two feet, the two knees, the two thighs, the stomach, the heart, the chest, the mouth and head progressively. [502] Beginning, with Oum, the apportioning is thus in this way.

Oum namo Narayanaya is then repeated in the reverse order. Thereafter, using the knowledge of the twelve aksharas, he must perform *kara-nyasa*. [503] Oum comes at the beginning and it ends with 'ya'. It starts with the index finger and ends with the joints of the thumbs. [504] Oum must be deposited in the heart, 'vi' in the crown of the head, 'sha' in the middle of the eyebrows and 'na' in the tuft of hair on the head. [505] 'Ve' is deposited in the two eyes and 'na' in all the joints of the body. 'Ma' is thought of as a weapon and a learned person thus becomes a personified form of the mantra—*Oum Vishnave namah*. The *visarga* sign, ending with *phat*, must be invoked in all the directions. [506] He must meditate on the supreme atman, the one who should be meditated upon and the one who possesses the six potencies. [507] He must then chant a mantra that is the embodied form of knowledge, energy and austerities. [508] 'Oum. May Hari bestow protection on me from all sides. He has placed his lotus feet on the back of the Indra among birds. He possesses eight arms that hold the conch shell, the discus, the shield, the sword, the mace, arrows, the bow and the noose. He possesses the eight powers. [509] In the form of a fish, may he protect me in the waters from large numbers of aquatic creatures and Varuna's noose. He used his maya to assume the form of a vamana brahmana. May he protect me on the land in this form. As Trivikrama, may the one whose form is the universe protect me in the sky. In his form of Nrisimha, the destroyer of asura hordes, may the lord protect me in impenetrable places, forests and the forefront of the battle. When he uttered his loud and great roar, it echoed in all the directions and the embryos were dislodged. [510] The sacrifice is his form. May he protect me along roads. [511] As *varaha*, [512] he raised the earth up on his own tusks. May Rama [513] protect me on the summits of mountains. With Lakshmana, may Bharata's elder brother [514] protect me in foreign lands. May Narayana protect me from all kinds of terrible adharma and distractions. May Nara protect me from pride. May Datta, the lord of yoga, protect me from deviations in the path of yoga. May Kapila, the lord of gunas, protect me from the bondage of karma. May Sanatkumara protect me from the god of love. May Hayashirsha protect me from ignoring gods along the road. May the noble devarshi [515] protect me from transgressions in worshipping the great being.

In his form of the turtle, may Hari protect me from all kinds of hell. May the illustrious Dhanvantari protect me from eating undesirable food. May Rishabha, who conquered his atman, protect me from fear on account of the opposite sentiments. May Yajna protect me from hardship brought about by other people. In his form of the Indra among serpents, may Bala protect me from the *krodhavasha*s. [516] May the illustrious Dvaipayana protect me against ignorance. May Buddha protect me against distractions caused by large numbers of heretics. May Kalki protect me from the impurities of the age known as kali yuga. He has descended in this form for the sake of protecting dharma. With his club, may Keshava protect me in the morning. [517] May Govinda, holding the flute, protect me during *sangava*. [518] May Narayana raise his spear and protect me in the forenoon. May Vishnu, with the weapon to destroy enemies in his hand, protect me at midday. May Madhusudana, with the fierce bow, protect me in the afternoon. May Madhava, with the three forms [519] protect me in the evening. May Hrishikesha protect me during the first part of the night. May Padmanabha protect me during the second part of the night and at midnight. May the lord, the abode of the shrivatsa mark, protect me during the latter part of the night. May the lord Janardana, the wielder of the sword, protect me just before dawn. May Damodara protect me during the morning sandhya. May the illustrious Vishveshvara, whose form is time, protect me just before morning. His sharp-edged chakra is like the fire of destruction that comes at the end of a yuga. Invoked by the illustrious one, it rages around in every direction. Please swiftly burn down all the enemy soldiers who deserve to be burnt down, just as the fire, with the wind as a friend, does to dry grass. O club! You have sparks of fire and are like the vajra to the touch. You are loved by the invincible one. Crush down those who should be crushed down. Pulverize the *kushmanda*s, *vainayaka*s, yakshas, rakshasas, bhutas and *graha*s. [520] Pulverize the enemy. O conch shell! When blown by Krishna, your blare is terrible and makes the hearts of enemies tremble. Drive away yatudhanas, pramathas, pretas, *matrika*s, pishachas and evil brahmanas who are malevolent in their glances. [521] O supreme sword that is sharp at the edges! The lord will use you against my enemy soldiers. Cut them. Sever them. O

shield with the mark of one hundred moons! Cover the eyes of the wicked enemies. Take away their evil eyesight. Evil planets, meteors, human beings, reptiles, fanged creatures, bhutas and sin cause us fear. By chanting the names and forms of the illustrious one, let all these head instantly towards their destruction. They are impediments in the way of our well-being. The illustrious Garuda is a lord who is praised in hymns and metres. Through the chanting of Vishvaksena's names, let him protect us from all kinds of hardships. Let Hari's names, forms and weapons protect us from all catastrophes. Let his ornaments, in the form of his companions, protect our intelligence, senses and the breath of life. The illustrious one is indeed everything that is manifest and is not manifest. Because of this truth, let everything that causes us harm head towards destruction. For those who have identified themselves with his atman, there is no difference between their own selves and he himself. Because of his own maya, his ornaments, weapons and different kinds of signs possess the powers. This is the true understanding of the illustrious and omniscient Hari. He goes everywhere. He is everywhere. Through his own forms, let him protect all of us. He is the illustrious Narasimha, who is inside and outside. He is in the sub-directions, the directions, above, below and everywhere around. Through his roar, let him destroy all the fear in the worlds. Through his own energy, let him envelope all the different kinds of powers." O Maghavan! I have described the armour that has Narayana inside it. Armed by it, you will easily vanquish the leaders of the asuras. If a person wears it, he is instantly freed from all fear that results from anything he sees with his eyes or touches with his feet. If a person bears this knowledge, he does not suffer any fear from any direction—from kings, bandits, evil planets, or physical or mental diseases. In ancient times, a brahmana named Koushika mastered this. Using the path of yoga, he cast off his life in the desert regions. Chitraratha, the lord of the gandharvas, surrounded by women, once travelled in a vimana, over the spot where the brahmana had died. He instantly fell down from the vimana in the sky, with his head facing downwards. He was astounded. Heeding the words of the Valakhilyas, he collected the bones and immersed them in the Sarasvati, which flows in an eastern direction. After

this, he bathed and returned to his own abode. Faced with danger, if a person hears this and faithfully remembers it, he is freed from all kinds of fear and all beings bow down before him. Shatakratu obtained this knowledge from Vishvarupa. Having vanquished the asuras in a battle, he enjoyed the prosperity of the three worlds.'

Chapter 6(9)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O descendant of the Bharata lineage! We have heard that Vishvarupa possessed three heads—one for drinking soma, one for drinking liquor and one for eating food. O king! It said that at the time of sacrifices, he openly gave shares to the gods and the ancestors who were divinities, to the loud and gentle chanting of mantras. However, he was tied in bonds of affection towards his mother. [522] Therefore, at the time of performing sacrifices, he covertly secreted a share and conveyed this share to the asuras. The lord of the gods noticed this disrespect towards the god and the violation of dharma. Scared, [523] in his rage, he swiftly severed his heads. The head that drank soma became a *kapinjala*. The head that drank liquor became a *kalavinka*. The head that ate food became a *tittiri*. [524] With cupped hands, the lord accepted the sin of killing a brahmana. To purify himself, at the end of a year, Hari [525] divided the elements of this sin into four parts and distributed it among the earth, water, trees and women. The earth accepted a fourth part because of the boon that ditches dug on earth will be filled up. [526] The sin of killing a brahmana is seen on earth in the form of the deserts. Trees accepted a fourth part because of the boon that severed branches will grow again. The sin of killing a brahmana is seen in the trees in the form of the sap. Women accepted a fourth part because of the boon that they would always experience desire. [527] This sin is seen in them every month, in the form of the menstrual discharge. Water accepted one fourth of the impurity because of the boon that it would increase the volume of a substance into which it was mixed. It is seen in water in the form of foam and froth and this must be collected and flung away.

‘When his son was killed, Tvashta offered oblations for the sake of generating Indra’s enemy. “O Indra’s enemy! Grow in strength and quickly kill the enemy.” A being, terrible in form, arose from the southern part of the sacrificial fire. He was like Death. It seemed to the worlds that the end of the yuga had arrived. Every day, on all sides, he increased by the length of an arrow’s flight. His appearance was like that of a burnt mountain. His complexion was like that of a mass of evening clouds. His hair and beard were like molten copper. His eyes were as fierce as the midday sun. With his blazing trident, he seemed to pierce the space between heaven and earth. When he danced or roared, the earth quaked because of his feet. His mouth was as deep as a cave and he seemed to drink up the sky. He seemed to lick the stars with his tongue and devour the three worlds. With a large array of terrible teeth, he yawned repeatedly. On seeing this, all beings were terrified and fled in the ten directions. This form was manifested because of Tvashta’s austerities and he seemed to envelop the worlds. The wicked and extremely terrible one was therefore known as Vritra. [528] Along with their followers, the bulls among the gods rushed forward to kill him, using their own respective divine *astra*s and *shastra*s. [529] However, he swallowed them all up. All of them were astounded and surprised at this. They lost their energy. They controlled themselves and approached the supreme and original being. The gods said, “The three worlds, consisting of wind, space, fire, water and land, and all of us, Brahma and the others, are terrified. We render offerings to the one, of whom, even Death is frightened. We seek refuge with him. He is never surprised. He is always completely satisfied with his own achievements. He is tranquil and serene. If a foolish person wishes to be protected by anyone else, he will be like a person who tries to cross an ocean by using a dog’s tail. [530] Manu tied his boat, in the form of the earth, to his horn, when he assumed the form of an aquatic creature, and crossed what was extremely difficult to traverse. [531] He will certainly deliver us dependents from this limitless fear on account of Tvashta’s son. In ancient times, Svayambhu was alone on his lotus seat and the flood of water was filled with turbulent waves, created by loud and terrible winds. He almost fell down. However, he was saved from that fear by him. Let him convey us

to a safe shore. He is the lone lord who controls us through his maya. He created us and we undertake creation in the universe. He is stationed in front of us, but we cannot discern his signs. We are proud because we think of ourselves as independent lords. When we are severely afflicted, using his own maya, from one yuga to another yuga, he always assumes avataras in the form of gods, rishis, men and subhuman species and saves us. All of us approach that god and seek refuge with him. He is the divinity who is there in our atmans. He is supreme and foremost, the great being. The universe is his manifestation. He is the one with whom one should seek refuge. The great-souled one always confers well-being on those who are devoted to him." O great king! He was worshipped by the gods in this way.

'Holding a conch shell, chakra and a club, he manifested himself inside their hearts. He was served and worshipped by sixteen attendants who were just like him in appearance, but were without shrivatsa and Koustubha. His eyes were like blooming autumn lotuses. On seeing him, their hearts were flooded with delight. O king! They prostrated themselves on the ground, like rods. Rising gradually, they worshipped him. The gods said, "We bow down before the one who is the seed of sacrifices. We bow down before the one who is time. We bow down before the one who wields the chakra. We bow down before the one who is addressed through auspicious names. You are the controller and the destination of the three. [532] You are the supreme refuge. O controller! Anyone born after the original creation is incapable of comprehending you. Oum. We bow down before the illustrious Narayana. O Vasudeva! O original being! O great being! O immensely glorious one! O supremely auspicious one! O supreme benediction! O supremely compassionate one! O absolute one! O support of the universe! O sole protector of the worlds! O lord of everything! O Lakshmi's lord! Paramahamsas wander around. They immerse their atmans in the yoga of meditation and worship the supreme one. When they are completely purified, he manifests himself before them. They follow the dharma of paramahamsas. The door of darkness is closed and consciousness is revealed to them. In the world of their atmans, they themselves obtain you and experience their own bliss from you. Your pastimes are extremely difficult to understand. You are not de-

pendent on anyone for support. You do not possess a material body. You do not expect any cooperation from us. There are no transformations in your atman. You are nirguna. But you create the gunas and preserve and destroy them. Do you exist in this material world? [533] It is created on the basis of the gunas and one descends into it. Is this under a superior person's control or is this because of one's own inauspicious deeds? Are you responsible for the fruits of good deeds? Should one accept them and be satisfied with them? The effects of good conduct also pass. You are said to be an impartial witness. We certainly do not understand all this. But since the illustrious one possesses an aggregate of an infinite number of qualities, there is no contradiction between the two. The lord's greatness is unfathomable. Modern debates, disputes, assertions, suggestions of proof, ill-informed arguments and references to sacred texts are used by agitated minds that resort to dogmatic theories and controversies. You are beyond the range of disputes and everything based on maya. You are absolute and are hidden inside this maya that you create. It is impossible to distinguish the difference between the two propositions and your true nature is independent of both of them. Depending on one's intelligence, a piece of rope can seem to be a snake. Like that, depending on whether a person's intelligence is balanced or prejudiced, you appear before them. He is indeed in every object and he is the substance of every object. He is the lord of everything. He is the cause behind all the causes that exist in the universe. His atman is present in everything and his illumination is manifest in all the gunas. He is the only thing that remains. [534] Indeed, his glory is an ocean of amrita. Even if a person tastes a drop of that only once, an incessant stream of bliss flows in his mind. He forgets everything that he has seen or heard and no reflection is left of the material objects of pleasure. Such great devotees are single-mindedly devoted to the illustrious one alone. He is the beloved well-wisher of all beings. He is in all atmans. O Madhu's destroyer! Their minds are completely and continuously immersed in you. They are accomplished in determining what is best for them. You are a beloved well-wisher, whom they love as much as their own selves. How can such virtuous people give up service at your lotus feet and again return to this cycle of samsara? You yourself are the foundation

of the three worlds. You are Trivikrama. You are Trinayana. [535] You are regarded as the most beautiful in the three worlds. Indeed, the offspring of Diti, Danu and the other species are also manifestations of your power. This is not the time for their endeavours to flourish. O wielder of the rod! Using your own maya, depending on the nature of the offence, you levy the rod of punishment by assuming the forms of gods, men, animals, mixed beings [536] or aquatic creatures. O illustrious one! In this way, if you so think, kill Tvashta's son. We depend on you. O father of our father! O Hari! We are prostrate before you. Our hearts are bound in love towards you and we meditate on your lotus feet. By revealing your signs to us, you have accepted us as your own. Glance towards us with your bright, pleasant, smiling and soothing looks, tinged with compassion. The sweet words that emerge from your mouth are like drops of amrita. O loved one! You should pacify the torment that is there in our hearts. O illustrious one! Using your divine maya, you amuse yourself and are the cause behind the creation, preservation and destruction of the entire universe. You are inside the hearts of the large number of living beings and outside too. You are the brahman and your own atman manifests itself in other forms. Pradhana is your form. Depending on the place, time, body, status and specifics, you are the cause. You are the experience and the one who experiences. You are a witness to every kind of thought. Your body is like the sky. You are yourself the supreme brahman, the paramatman. In this world, how can we inform you about our specific requirements? That will be like sparks of fire illuminating the fire. O illustrious one! Therefore, you should yourself think about what should be done for us. You are the supreme preceptor and we have sought the shade of your feet, which are like lotuses with a hundred petals. There are many kinds of hardships and exertions in samsara and you relieve them for those who seek refuge with you. So that our wishes can be satisfied, we have resorted to you. O lord! Therefore, slay Tvashta's son. He is devouring the three worlds. O Krishna! He has devoured our energy, our astras and weapons. [537] O hamsa! O one who resides in the core of the heart! O witness! O Krishna! O immensely famous one! O one who has no beginning! O treasure for the virtuous! For those who seek you out as a destination,

you are the ultimate and supreme goal and the object of all exertions. O Hari! We bow down before you." O king! Hari was thus lovingly worshipped by the gods. He heard their praises and was pleased. He replied.

'The illustrious one said, "O best among the gods! I am pleased with you and with the knowledge that exists in your praises. If a man is devoted to me, that kindles in him the memory of the greatness of the atman. O bulls among the gods! When I am pleased, what is difficult to accomplish? If a person knows the truth and if his intelligence is fixed on me, he wishes for nothing else. A miser considers the qualities of material objects and does not know what is best for himself. What is bestowed on a person is in accordance with what he wishes for. A learned person knows what is best for himself and does not prescribe rituals to the ignorant, just as an excellent physician does not recommend unwholesome food to a patient, even if he desires it. O Maghavan! May you be fortunate. Go quickly to Dadhyan, [538] supreme among rishis. His body is full of learning, vows and austerities. Ask him for that. Dadhyan has obtained realization of the pure brahman and imparted that knowledge to the two Ashvins. Because of this, these two became immortal. This knowledge is known as Ashvashira. [539] This invincible armour has me as its essence. [540] Dadhyan, Atharvan's son, also conferred it on Tvashta. Tvashta gave it to Vishvarupa and Vishvarupa taught you this. He [541] knows about dharma. When you and the Ashvins ask, he will give his limbs. Vishvakarma will fashion the best among weapons out of this. It will be full of my energy and with this, you will be able to sever Vritra's head. When he has been killed, you will regain your energy, astras, weapons and prosperity. You will regain your good fortune. No one can harm those who are devoted to me."'

Chapter 6(10)

Shri-Shuka said, 'The illustrious creator of the universe instructed Indra in this way. While they looked on, in the twinkling of an eye, Hari vanished from the spot. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Atharvan's great son

was entreated by the gods and the rishis. Delighted, he smiled and replied to them. "O lords of the senses! You do not know about the severe and unbearable pain that those with bodies suffer at the time of death. It deprives them of consciousness. For living beings who wish to remain alive in this world, this body is extremely desired. Even if Vishnu asks for it, who will be interested in giving it up?" The gods said, "O brahmana! You are compassionate towards beings. You are a great and learned person. Your deeds are praised in excellent shlokas. What can be difficult for a person like you to give up? Indeed, there are people who are only concerned with selfish ends. They do not know about the dangers faced by others. If they knew, no one would have to ask. A lord of charity never says 'no', as long as he can." The rishi replied, "I answered in that way because I wished to hear about dharma from you. This body will cast me aside some day and I am casting aside what is desired by you. O protectors! This body is not permanent. In this world, if a man does not show compassion towards beings, he does not obtain dharma or fame. Even immobile objects grieve over him. This is the eternal dharma followed by those who are praised in excellent shlokas. A person's mind must grieve at the sorrow of creatures and rejoice at their delight. Alas! This is a great hardship in this world. [542] This body is perishable and should belong to others. A mortal person should not use it for one's own selfish needs, but for others. He must use his wealth, relatives and body for others." Thus, Dadhyan, the son of Atharvan, made up his mind to give up his body. Giving it up, he surrendered his atman to the illustrious one, the supreme brahman. He knew about the truth and controlled his senses, breath of life, mind and intelligence. Destroying all bondage, he resorted to supreme yoga and did not realize when he left his body.

'Thus, Vishvakarma fashioned the vajra and Indra wielded it. It was infused with the sage's powers and was also full of the illustrious one's energy. He was surrounded by a large number of gods and was astride an Indra among elephants. He was praised by a large number of sages and delighted the three worlds. His enemy, Vritra, was surrounded by leaders of the asura army. O king! With great energy, he angrily attacked him, like Rudra advancing against Yama. There was an extremely terrible battle between the

gods and the asuras. It was like the one that took place between them on the banks of the Narmada, at the end of the first yuga and the beginning of treta. There were the Rudras, the Vasus, the Adityas, the Ashvins, the ancestors, the fire gods, the Maruts, the Ribhus, the Sadhyas and the Vishvadevas, surrounding the lord of the Maruts. [543] Shakra, the wielder of the vajra, was resplendent in his own prosperity. O king! On witnessing this in the battle, the asuras, with Vritra at the forefront, could not tolerate this. There were Namuchi, Shambara, Anarva, Dvimurdha, Rishabha, Ambara, Hayagriva, Shankushira, Viprachitti, Ayomukha, Puloma, Vrishaparva, Praheti, Heti, Utkala, daityas, danavas and thousands of yakshas and rakshasas. The prominent Mali and Sumali wore armour made out of molten gold. They countered the vanguard of Indra's army, which was impossible for even Death to withstand. They attacked fearlessly. They were invincible and roared like lions. They used clubs, maces, arrows, spears, bludgeons, javelins, tridents, battleaxes, swords, *shataghni*s and *bhushundi*s. [544] From every direction, they repulsed the bulls among the gods with shastras and astras. Because of the nets of arrows in every direction, nothing could be seen. Arrows descended one after another, like masses of dense clouds, and even the stellar bodies became invisible. However, those torrents of shastras and astras could not make the soldiers of the gods suffer. The gods were dexterous in the use of their hands and cut them down into thousands of fragments before they could reach their targets. When the stocks of shastras and astras became exhausted, they showered down summits of mountains, trees and boulders on the army of the gods. However, as earlier, these too were severed. Vritra's leaders saw that Indra's soldiers were unharmed by the torrents of shastras and astras and were safe. They were not even injured by the trees, boulders and the many summits of mountains. They were scared. All their efforts were in vain. The daityas again tried to attack the army of the gods, but Krishna was favourable towards the latter. There was no effect, just as harsh words uttered by inferior people have no impact on great ones. They were not devoted to Hari and saw that their attempts were futile. Their insolence in the field of battle was destroyed. All their spirits were taken away. They made up their minds to abandon their leader and flee

from the forefront of the battle. The spirited Vritra saw that his asura followers were running away. He saw that his army was routed and fleeing, overcome by great fear. The brave one laughed and spoke to them. The foremost one spoke words that were appropriate for the occasion, appealing to spirited ones. "O Viprachitti! O Namuchi! O Puloma! O Maya! O Anarva! O Shambara! Listen to me. Death is always certain for anyone who has been born. In this world, nothing has been thought of that can counter this. If death in this world leads to other worlds and fame, why should one not accept this as something that is appropriate? Two kinds of death are revered, but they are extremely difficult to get. One can conquer one's breath of life, concentrate on the brahman and immerse oneself in yoga to give up one's body. Alternatively, without retreating, one can bravely lie down in the field of battle."'

Chapter 6(11)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O king! Their master's [545] words praised dharma. However, they were senseless and intent on running away. Scared, they did not accept these words. The bull among asuras saw that his army of asuras had been routed. Time was favourable towards the gods. Time was unfavourable towards them and they were without a protector. Witnessing this, Indra's enemy was pained, angry and intolerant. O king! Restraining them energetically, he censured them in these words. "Why are you fleeing, like excrement released by your mothers? Those who pride themselves on being brave do not strike people from the rear, or kill those who are frightened. That is not praiseworthy. Nor does it lead to heaven. O insignificant ones! If you have the slightest bit of fight left in your hearts and do not desire the delight of carnal pleasures, stand at least in front of me." He was extremely powerful and his angry and terrible form made the worlds and the large number of gods lose their senses when he roared. Hearing Vritra's roar, the large number of gods fell down on the ground, senseless, as if they had been struck by the vajra. He was indomitable in the field of battle and he crushed

the afflicted soldiers of the gods with his feet. They closed their eyes. He energetically brandished his trident and made the earth tremble. He was like a maddened leader of elephants amidst a forest of lotus flowers. On seeing him advance, the wielder of the vajra became extremely intolerant. He hurled a gigantic club towards him and it was extremely difficult to withstand. As it was descending, he playfully caught it in his left hand. Indra's enemy was greatly enraged. In the battle, great in his valour, he struck Indra's mount on the temple with the club and roared. O king! Everyone applauded this feat. Airavata was struck by Vritra's club and whirled around, like a mountain struck by thunder. Its mouth was shattered and it exuded blood from its mouth. Suffering greatly, with Indra, it retreated a distance of seven bow-lengths. Since the mount was suffering, his [546] mind was miserable. The great-souled one [547] did not strike again with the club. Indra touched the mount with his hand, which oozed out amrita. With the pain and wounds healed, it stood there again.

'O Indra among kings! He saw his enemy, the slayer of his brother, [548] wishing to fight and using the vajra as a weapon. He remembered that cruel and sinful act and grieved. Confounded, he laughed and said the following. Vritra said, "It is good fortune that this noble enemy is stationed in front of me. You are the killer of a brahmana who was my brother and your preceptor. O most wicked person! It is good fortune that I shall free myself from my debt today. Your heart is made out of stone and it will soon be pierced by my trident. My elder brother knew about the atman and he was a brahmana. He was innocent and you instated him as your preceptor. He trusted you. But desiring heaven, you mercilessly severed his heads with your sword, just as one does to an animal. Because of your own deeds, your modesty, prosperity, compassion and fame have gone. You are condemned by flesh-eaters too. When I pierce your body with my trident, you will suffer pain. It will not be touched by the fire and will be devoured by vultures. There are others who are cruel and ignorant. Raising their weapons, they are striking me. With my sharp trident, I will pierce their throats and offer those as a sacrifice to the lords of the bhutas and their companions. O Hari! O brave one! Or you may sever my head with your vajra and crush my

army. In that case, I will pay my debts and offer myself as a sacrifice to all living beings. I will obtain the dust on the feet of spirited ones. O lord of the gods! Why are you not hurling your invincible vajra towards me? Your enemy is stationed in front of you. Do not harbour a doubt. Like the club, your vajra will not be successful, like a request made to a miser. O Shakra! Your vajra has certainly been infused with Hari's energy and with energy from Dadhichi's austerities. It is controlled by Vishnu. Using it, slay the enemy. Wherever Hari exists, prosperity, victory and qualities exist there. [549] As we have been asked, my mind will meditate on the lotus feet of Samkarshana. The bond of carnal pleasures will be torn asunder by the force of your vajra. I will give up this world and obtain the destination of the sages. For men who are his devotees and are single-minded in their intelligence, he does not confer the prosperity of heaven, the earth, or the nether regions. Those lead to hatred, anxiety, mental diseases, pride, dissension, hardships and great exertion. O Shakra! Our lord creates obstructions in the path of attaining the three objectives. [550] It can be inferred that the favours of the illustrious one are extremely difficult to obtain. They can be obtained by those who regard everything else as insignificant, and not by others. O Hari! [551] Let me be a servant to the servants for whom your feet are the only refuge. Let my mind remember the qualities of the lord of life. Let me chant your praise with my words. Let my body perform your deeds. I do not desire the vault of heaven, the position of Parameshthi, sovereignty over the entire earth, lordship of the nether regions, the siddhis of yoga, or liberation from rebirth, if that means a separation from you. O lotus-eyed one! My mind wishes to see you, just as fledgling birds without wings wish to see their mother, calves afflicted by hunger desire milk from the udder, or a miserable lover wishes to see her beloved, who is away from home. O lord! While I wander around in the wheel of samsara because of my own deeds, let me obtain the friendship of Uttamashloka's devotees and not with those whose minds are attached, because of your maya, to the body, children, wives and homes."'

Chapter 6(12)

The rishi said, 'O king! In this way, he thought that death was superior to victory and was ready to give up his life. He seized the trident and attacked Indra of the gods, just as in the middle of the waters, Kaitabha had attacked the great being. The brave Indra among the asuras swiftly hurled the trident, with points that were as firm as the fire of destruction that comes at the end of a yuga, towards the great Indra and roared. He exclaimed in rage, "O wicked one! You have been killed." It descended from the sky, like a planet or meteor that had been dislodged. It was impossible to look at. But without any fear, the wielder of the vajra, which possessed one hundred joints, severed it, along with his arm, which was as thick as the body of the king of serpents. With one of his arms severed, Vritra angrily approached the wielder of the vajra and struck Indra and his elephant on the temple with a club. The vajra fell down from Maghavan's hand. Vritra's deed was extremely marvelous and the gods, the asuras and large numbers of charanas and Siddhas applauded it. They saw that Puruhuta [552] faced a difficulty and miserably lamented, "Alas!" In the presence of the enemy, Indra was ashamed that the vajra had got dislodged from his hand and did not pick it up again. Vritra told him, "O Indra! This is not the time to grieve. Pick up the vajra and slay your own enemy. A person who picks up his weapon and fights is never assured of victory all the time. The sole exception is the original, eternal and omniscient being, the paramatman, the controller of creation, preservation and destruction. It is because of him that the worlds and their guardians are dependent and live under his control, like birds captured in a net. He is time and the cause. [553] Ignorant people who are foolish think themselves to be responsible for energy, strength, the breath of life, immortality and death. O Maghavan! A female image made out of wood or the figure of an animal made out of leaves are dependent on the controller. Know that all creatures are like this. Without his favours, Purusha, Prakriti, Mahat, ego, the elements, the senses and the mind are incapable of creating. A person who does not know takes himself to be the controller, though he is controlled. It is he who himself creates beings out of the elements and devours them again. A man's lifespan, prosperity, deeds, opulence and benedictions

exist at the right time. Otherwise, even if he does not wish it, there is adversity. Therefore, one should be indifferent towards ill fame, fame, victory, defeat, joy, misery, life and death. If a person knows that sattva, rajas and tamas are the qualities of Prakriti and that the atman is only a witness, he is not bound down. O enemy! Look at me. I have been defeated in the battle and my weapon and arm have been severed. Nevertheless, to the best of my ability, I am trying to take away your life. This battle is a gamble where life is the stake, the arrows are the dice and the mounts are the board. It is not known whether this one will be victorious and that one will be defeated." Indra heard Vritra's words, which were without any deceit. He honoured them. He overcame his wonder, seized the vajra, laughed and spoke the following. "O danava! With intelligence like this, it is my view that you are a Siddha. With all your soul, you are a devotee of the lord of the universe, the great well-wisher. You have transcended Vaishnavi maya, which confounds people. You have given up the sentiments of an asura and have obtained the status of a great being. You possess rajas by nature. Your single-minded devotion to the illustrious one, who is full of sattva, is a great wonder. The illustrious Hari is the lord of all that is beneficial. If one is devoted to him, one sports in an ocean of amrita. What is the need for water from small ditches?" O king! Determining the nature of dharma, they spoke to each other in this way. The immensely valiant Indra and Vritra, the leaders of armies, fought against each other.

'O revered one! Vritra, the destroyer of enemies, whirled a terrible iron club and using his left hand, hurled it towards Indra. Simultaneously, the god used his vajra, possessing one hundred joints, to sever the club and Vritra's arm, which was like the trunk of an elephant. Both of the asura's arms were severed at the bases and blood started to flow. He was like a mountain with its wings severed by the vajra, which therefore fell down from the sky. [554] He was gigantic in size and immensely valiant. He was like a gigantic serpent, or an elephant. The daitya's lower jaw touched the ground and his upper jaw reached up into the sky. His mouth was as deep as the sky. His terrible tongue flickered like that of a snake. His teeth were like Death and seemed to devour the three worlds. His extremely large and gigantic body

trembled violently, like a mountain. It was as if the king of mountains [555] was moving around on its feet and crushing the earth with the tread of its steps. He approached and swallowed the wielder of the vajra and his mount. The Prajapatis, the gods and the maharshis saw that he had been swallowed by Vritra. Despondent, they exclaimed, "Alas! This is a catastrophe." Indra of the gods was swallowed, but did not die inside the stomach. He was protected by the great being's armour and the strength of yoga maya. The lord powerfully tore apart the stomach with the vajra and emerged. Using his energy, he then severed the enemy's head, which was like the summit of a mountain. The vajra whirled around his neck with great speed, revolving and severing it from all sides. Vritra's head was severed and brought down in as many days as stellar bodies take for two ayanas. [556] After this, drums were sounded in the sky. The gandharvas, the Siddhas and large numbers of maharshis praised the qualities of the one who had killed Vritra. Delighted, to the accompaniment of mantras, they showered down flowers. O destroyer of enemies! While all the gods looked on, a resplendent light emerged from Vritra's body. He reached the radiant world.'

Chapter 6(13)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O generous one! When Vritra was slain, with the exception of Shakra, all the worlds and their guardians were freed of their anxiety and their senses were delighted. The devarshis, the ancestors, the bhutas, the daityas and the followers of the gods returned to their own respective abodes. So did Brahma, Isha, Indra and the others.'

The king asked, 'O sage! I wish to hear the reason why Indra was sad. When all the gods were happy, what was the reason for Hari to be miserable?'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'When they were anxious about Vritra's valour, all the gods and rishis approached Indra, so that he might kill him. However, he did not desire to indulge in this great killing. [557]

'Indra said, "When I killed Vishvarupa, women, the earth, trees and water showed me their favours and distributed the sin among themselves. How will I be able to cleanse the sin of killing Vritra?"'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'Hearing this, the rishis told the great Indra, "Do not fear. O fortunate one! With our help, you will perform a horse sacrifice. The lord and great being, the god Narayana, the paramatman is pleased through a horse sacrifice and will free you, even if you happen to kill everyone in the universe. By chanting his name, the slayer of a brahmana, the slayer of a father, the slayer of a cow, the slayer of a mother, the slayer of a preceptor, a sinner, a person who eats dogs, and even a *pulkasa*, [558] are all purified. With devotion, we must perform a great horse sacrifice. Even if you kill all mobile and immobile objects, along with Brahma, you will not be tainted. Killing one wicked person is nothing." Thus urged by the brahmanas, the lord of the Maruts killed his enemy. As soon as he had been killed, the sin of killing a brahmana attacked Vrishakapi. [559] Indra started to suffer from that torment and once it had entered, he could find no peace. His other qualities, like those of modesty and speech, were unable to make him happy. In the form of a *chandala* woman, he saw the sin chasing after him. Her limbs trembled because of her old age. She has suffering from pulmonary consumption and her garments were covered with blood. Her grey hair was dishevelled and she asked him to wait. A bad smell of rotten fish emanated from her and made the road stink. O lord of the earth! The one with one thousand eyes went up into the sky and all the directions. O king! Finally, he quickly went to the north-eastern direction and entered Manasa. Invisible to everyone, he dwelt inside the fibre of a lotus for one thousand years, with no subsistence other than what the fire god brought him. He kept thinking about how he would free himself from the sin of killing a brahmana. Nahusha possessed learning, austerities, yoga, strength and the right sentiments and ruled the third world [560] during this period. However, the evil-minded one became insolent because of his prosperity and opulence and was conveyed to the status of a subhuman species by Indra's wife. [561] Thereafter, he [562] was invited by the brahmanas to return. He meditated on the lord, who counters all sins. The divinity of the direction robbed the sin

of its powers. [563] Since he was also protected by Vishnu's wife, it could not harm him. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The brahmana rishis approached him and consecrated him for a horse sacrifice, following the appropriate rites. This indeed means worship of the great being. He worshipped the being whose atman is in all the gods. Those who know about the brahman invited the great Indra to come and perform the horse sacrifice. O king! There was a mass of sin that had accumulated because he had killed Tvashta's son. Like dew is dispelled by the sun, this was reduced to nothing. As ordained, the horse sacrifice was performed by Marichi and the other officiating priests. The great and ancient being, the lord of sacrifices was worshipped and Indra was cleansed of his sin. This great account is a recital of the deeds of the one whose feet are a tirtha and cleanses all sins. It describes the faith of devotees and enhances devotion. It describes the victory and liberation of the great Indra, lord of the Maruts. Learned people must always read this account. Controlling their senses, they must listen to it on auspicious days. Through this, one obtains wealth, fame, liberation from all sins, victory over enemies, benedictions and long lifespans.'

Chapter 6(14)

Parikshit asked, 'O brahmana! The evil Vritra was naturally full of rajas and tamas. How did his mind become firmly fixed on devotion towards Narayana? Even among gods who are full of pure sattva and rishis with unblemished souls, devotion towards Mukunda's lotus feet is generally not generated. On earth, there are living beings as numerous as the number of particles of dust. Among them, it is only a few, human beings and others, who act for their well-being. O supreme among brahmanas! Among these, it is generally only a few who seek liberation. Among a thousand who seek liberation, perhaps it is only one who gets liberated. O great sage! Among crores who have obtained liberation and are Siddhas, it is extremely difficult to find one who is devoted to Narayana and is tranquil in his atman. Vritra was wicked and tormented all the worlds. In the fierce field of battle,

how was his mind so firmly fixed on Krishna? O lord! I have yet another doubt and wish to satisfy my curiosity. In the battle, he satisfied the one with one thousand eyes with his manliness.' [564]

Suta said, 'Badarayana's illustrious son was thus asked by the devoted Parikshit. He heard, welcomed the question, and spoke the following words.'

Shri-Shuka said, 'O king! Hear the history attentively. I heard it from the mouths of Dvaipayana, Narada and Devala. O king! In the land of Shurasena, there was a king who was a sovereign emperor. He was known as Chitraketu and he could milk the earth for whatever he desired. He had ten million wives. However, though the king was capable of producing sons, he did not have any sons through them. He possessed beauty, generosity, youth, noble birth, learning, prosperity, opulence and other qualities. However, he always thought about the barreness and that he did not have offspring. All his riches and queens, with beautiful eyes, and sovereignty over the earth did not give him reason for delight. Once, the illustrious rishi, Angiras, came to his mansion. As he wished, he was travelling around the worlds and arrived. He [565] immediately stood up and following the prescribed rites, offered him what he deserved. After receiving the hospitality, when he was happily seated, he [566] controlled himself and sat down near him. Angiras asked, "Are you well? Is there well-being for you and the ordinary people? Just as a man is protected by seven constituents, a king is protected by seven objects. [567] By binding himself to the seven constituents, a person can obtain what is beneficial. O lord of men! Like that, the seven objects take away everything inauspicious from a king. Are your wives, subjects, advisers, servants, *shreni*s, [568] ministers, citizens, inhabitants of the countryside, landholders and your sons obedient to you? If a person has controlled himself, all these remain under his control. Without any deviation, the worlds and their guardians offer him tribute. I can see that you are not happy, with yourself or with others. It can be discerned that you have not attained your objective. Because of your thoughts, your face is pale." O king! He was thus asked various questions by the learned sage. Desiring offspring, he replied to the sage. Chitraketu said, "O illustrious one! Be-

cause of your austerities, knowledge and meditation, what is unknown to you? Inside and outside their bodies, yogis destroy all sins. O brahmana! Though you know everything, you have nevertheless asked about the reason for my mental anxiety. Urged by you, and with your permission, I am telling you. My empire, prosperity and opulence is sought after by the guardians of the worlds. But I am like a person who is hungry and thirsty. These cause me no delight, since I wish for something else—children. O immensely fortunate one! Therefore, protect me and my ancestors, who will descend into darkness. Act so that I have offspring, so that we are able to cross over to the distant shore." The illustrious one, Brahma's son, was compassionate and was entreated in this way. The lord cooked some *charu* [569] for Tvashta and performed a sacrifice for Tvashta. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Among the king's queens, the eldest and the best had the name of Kritadyuti. The brahmana gave her the leftover of the sacrificial offering. [570] O king! Brahma's son told the king, "You will have a son who will be the cause of both joy and grief." After this, he departed.

'After eating the leftovers, through Chitraketu, Queen Kritadyuti conceived, just as the Krittikas had a son through Agni. O king! Born through the energy of the lord of Shurasena, the embryo developed from one day to another day, like the moon during shukla paksha. In due course of time, a son was born. Hearing about the birth, all the residents of Shurasena were greatly delighted. The happy king bathed and purified himself and wore ornaments. He had brahmanas pronounce words of benediction and made them perform the birth rites for the son. He gave them gold, silver, garments, ornaments, villages, horses, elephants and sixty crore cows. Like Parjanya showering down desired objects on living beings, the great-souled one donated these for the wealth, fame and long life of his son. When a person without riches obtains wealth after a great deal of difficulty, his attachment towards the riches increases. Like that, the father, a royal sage, had his attachment towards his son increase day by day. The mother's love for the son also increased excessively. Because of their confusion, Kritadyuti's co-wives became feverish and hankered after offspring. Chitraketu became greatly attached to the wife who had borne him a son. He fondled the child

every day and was no longer attached to the others. Because of their jealousy, they lamented and condemned themselves. There was the misery of not having children, compounded by the king's neglect. "Shame on a wicked woman who does not have offspring. She has no respect in her husband's house. Co-wives who have offspring censure them like maid servants. Even maid servants don't have to lament. If they constantly serve their master, they are shown respect. We unfortunate ones are the maid servants of maidservants." Since the king's conduct did not show them any respect, the co-wives were tormented and their hatred for the one who possessed the treasure of a son became very strong. Their intelligence was destroyed by their enmity. The women became very hard of heart. Extremely intolerant towards the king, they administered poison to the prince. Kritadyuti wasn't aware of the great sin committed by her co-wives. She looked at him and thought that he was asleep. Therefore, she roamed around the house. After some time, the spirited one noticed that her son had been asleep for a very long time. She urged the nursemaid, "O fortunate one! Bring my son to me." When she approached the one who was lying down, she saw that his eyes were turned upwards. His breath of life and senses had abandoned him. She exclaimed, "Alas! I have been killed!" and fell down on the ground. The queen heard her extremely piteous tone and the sounds of her loudly beating her breasts with her hands. She entered and swiftly approached her son and saw that her infant son had suddenly died. With her misery increasing, she fell down on the ground. Because she lost consciousness, her hair and garments were dishevelled. The people, the men and the women who resided in the inner quarters, heard the sounds of the lamentation. Arriving, they were also equally miserable and extremely unhappy. Those who had committed the crime also started to weep deceitfully. Hearing that his son had died because of an undetermined reason, the king lost his eyesight and repeatedly stumbled along the way. Tied by bonds of affection, his great grief increased. Surrounded by ordinary people and brahmanas, he fell down unconscious. The dead one's hair and garments were dishevelled and he fell down at the child's feet. He sighed deeply and his voice was choked with tears. He was unable to say anything. The child,

the single heir and son, was dead. On seeing that her husband was grieving a lot, the queen also started to lament in many kinds of ways, increasing the grief of the ordinary people who were assembled there. Her breasts were smeared with kunkuma paste, but they were now sprinkled with drops of tears mixed with collyrium. Her hair was dishevelled and her garland was cast aside. Like a female osprey, she lamented in a sweet and extraordinary tone for her son. "Alas! O Vidhatri! You are exceedingly foolish. You have acted contrary to your own creation. An elder person is alive, while a younger person has died. This is perverse and you must certainly be an enemy. In this world, if there is no progression in the matter of birth and death, that may be because of the own karma of living beings. But this increase in the bond of affection is also your own creation. You have yourself created it and are now cutting it asunder. O son! [571] I am miserable and without a protector. You should not have abandoned me. Look at your father. He is tormented by grief. We could have crossed the darkness with your help. Without a son, it is extremely difficult to cross. With the merciless Yama, do not go far away. O son! Arise. These children are your friends. O son of a king! They are summoning you, so that you can play with them. You have slept for a long time and you must be suffering from hunger. Drink at my breasts and take away the grief of your relatives. O dear son! Since I am unfortunate, I have not seen your beautiful and smiling face, which is like a lotus. Your eyes are closed. Have you gone to another world, from which, one does not return? Have you been taken away by the merciless one? [572] I cannot hear your sweet words." In many kinds of lamentations, she wailed about her dead son. Chitraketu was also severely tormented and wept in a loud voice. The couple and all their followers lamented. The men and women wept and everyone seemed to be unconscious. Everyone was thus overwhelmed by misery, unconscious and without a leader. Knowing this, the rishi named Angiras arrived there, along with Narada.'

Chapter 6(15)

Shri-Shuka said, 'They spoke to the king, who had fallen down next to the dead body, like another dead body. He was overwhelmed with grief and they instructed him with virtuous words. "O Indra among kings! You are sorrowing over him, but what is the relationship between him and you? How is he related to you in this birth, in a past birth and in a future birth? Small grains of sand come together and then drift apart because of the force of the flow. Like that, because of time, embodied beings come together and are separated. From seeds, crops may result, or they may not result. In that way, urged by the lord's maya, living beings may, or may not, create other living beings. We, you, and all mobile and immobile objects that exist with us at this point in time, were not like this before this birth, and nor will they be like this after death. This is only occurring in the present. The lord of beings creates and destroys beings through other beings. They are created by him and are not independent. Like a child, he creates them, without being interested. O king! The body of an embodied being is created from one body through another body, [573] just as seeds result from other seeds. What is inside the body [574] is eternal. Since ancient times, those who are without discrimination have not been able to distinguish the body from the one who is inside the body. This is exactly the way classes, individuals and other divisions have been created for objects." King Chitraketu was thus comforted by the words of the brahmanas. His face was wan. He wiped it with his hand and spoke. The king asked, "Who are you? You are full of knowledge and are the greatest of the greatest. You have come here, disguising yourself as avadhutas. Brahmanas who are loved by the illustrious one roam around on earth, as they desire, often in the forms of those who are mad. This is to instruct those like me, who are ordinary and obsessed by the senses. Kumara, [575] Narada, Ribhu, Angiras, Devala, Asita, Apantaratama, Vyasa, Markandeya, Goutama, Vasishtha, the illustrious Rama, [576] Kapila, Badarayana's son, Durvasa, Yajnavalkya, Jatukarnya, Aruni, Romasha, Chyavana, Datta, Asuri, Patanjali, the rishi Vedashira, the sage Bodhya, Panchashira, Hiranyanabha, Koushalya, Shrutadeva, Ritadhvaja—these and other lords of success roam around for the sake of imparting knowledge. I

am as foolish in my intelligence as a village animal. Therefore, you are my lords. I am immersed in blinding darkness. Please ignite me with the lamp of knowledge." Angiras replied, "O king! I am Angiras. When you desired a son, I am the one who gave you a son. This is Brahma's son, the illustrious rishi Narada himself. Because of sorrow on account of your son, you are immersed in this darkness here and find it extremely difficult to cross. This is not deserving of you. Remember that you had approached the great being. O lord! The two of us have arrived here to show you our favours. You are devoted to brahmanas and to the illustrious one. You should not lament in this way. When I arrived in your house, I could have granted you supreme knowledge. However, knowing that your mind was on something else, I gave you a son. You have thus experienced the torments of those who have sons. The wife, the home, wealth and many kinds of prosperity and opulence are also like that. So are different kinds of sound. Objects of the senses and the power that comes with the kingdom are fickle, as are the earth, the kingdom, the army, the treasury, servants, advisers and well-wishers. O Shurasena! All of them are afflicted by grief, confusion and fear. These are like the cities of gandharvas in the sky, as illusory as wishes satisfied in dreams. What can be seen is without substance. What cannot be seen is also a creation of the mind. If one thinks about the fruits of action, many kinds of action are generated from the mind. This body of embodied beings consists of gross elements and the organs of sense and action. This is said to be the reason why embodied beings suffer from many kinds of hardships and torment. Therefore, be assured in your mind and consider the progress of the atman. Give up this belief in duality and do not regard this world as permanent. Take refuge in serenity." Narada said, "Control yourself and accept this *mantropanishad* [577] from me. If you meditate on this for seven nights, you will see lord Samkarshana. O Indra among kings! In earlier times, obtaining the refuge of his feet, Sharva [578] and the others instantly gave up this notion of duality and obtained his unmatched and unsurpassed glory. Within a short period of time, you will also obtain the supreme."'

Chapter 6(16)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O king! Then the devarshi showed the king's dead son to the grieving relatives. [579] Narada said, "O jivatman! May you be fortunate. Behold your mother, father, well-wishers and relatives. On your account, they are tormented severely by grief. Since some lifespan is left for you, enter this body of yours. Surrounded by your well-wishers, enjoy the objects of pleasure given to you by your father and be seated on the royal throne." The jivatman replied, "Because of my karma, while I was roaming around in births as gods, humans and inferior species, in which of these lives were they my father and mother? Everyone is gradually related to everyone else as a friend, relative, enemy, a neutral person, an indifferent person, or as an adversary. Here and there, as objects of trade, gold and other objects move around among men. In that way, a jivatman moves from one species to another. Among men, relationships based on material objects are always seen to be temporary. The sense of ownership only exists as long as that relationship lasts. The jivatman also enters a womb in that way, though it is eternal and without any ahamkara. As long as it exists in some form, the sense of the self also exists for that period of time. The atman is eternal and without decay. It is self-illuminating and subtle, resorting to different abodes. The lord himself creates the universe with the gunas of his own maya. For the atman, nothing is agreeable or disagreeable. There is nothing that is its own, nor anything that belongs to someone else. It is the single witness of the good and bad deeds that doers with different kinds of intelligence do. The atman does not accept the good or the bad, or the fruits of deeds. It is inside and is indifferent. It is the lord that witnesses both cause and effect." Having said this, the jivatman departed. The relatives were filled with wonder and severing the shackles of affection, freed themselves from the grief. The relatives removed their relative's dead body and performed the appropriate funeral rites. Afflicted by grief, confusion and fear, they cast aside their affection, which is so difficult to get rid of. Those who had slain the child were ashamed. Because of the killing of the child, they lost their splendour. As determined by the brahmanas, they performed the atonement vows for

the killing of a child. O great king! On the banks of the Yamuna, they remembered what the brahmana told them. [580]

'Because of the words of the brahmanas, [581] Chitraketu's knowledge was thus awakened. He emerged from the state of being a householder, which was like a dark pit, like an elephant emerging from a lake full of mud. In the proper way, he bathed in the waters of the Kalindi [582] and performed the sacred water rites. Controlling his breath of life, he silently worshipped Brahma's two sons. [583] Controlling himself, he sought their refuge as a devotee. Delighted, the illustrious Narada spoke to him about the knowledge. [584] "Oum! I bow down before the illustrious one. We meditate on Vasudeva. We bow down to Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Samkarshana. I bow down before the one who is the full measure of knowledge, whose form is full of supreme bliss. He is the one who is delighted with his own atman. He is the tranquil one. He is the one whose vision withdraws from duality. I bow down before the one who realizes the delight of his own atman. He is the one who has kept away the waves. [585] I bow down before the great Hrishikesha, whose form is infinite. He is the single one who cannot be attained through words and the mind. He has no name or form and is consciousness alone. He is the cause behind all causes. May he protect us. He is the one from whom everything is created, preserved and destroyed. Objects made out of earth dissolve into the earth. [586] We bow down before the brahman. Nothing can touch him. The mind, intelligence, the senses and the breath of life cannot know him. Like the sky, he expands inside and outside. I bow down before him. When they are charged by his portions, the body, the senses, the breath of life, the mind and the intelligence move and undertake deeds. At other times, they are like iron that has not been heated. In different kinds of situations, he is known as the witness. Oum! I bow down before the illustrious and great being, the supreme person who is the lord of great powers. Among a multitude of great devotees, only a few can cup their hands, which are like the buds of lotuses, and worship and serve his lotus feet. I bow down before the supreme lord." Narada taught this knowledge to the devotee who had sought refuge with him. After this, along with Angiras, the lord went to Svayambhu's abode.

‘As had been instructed by Narada, Chitraketu chanted this for one week, controlling himself and subsisting on water. O king! After chanting this mantra without any deviation, at the end of the seventh night, he obtained lordship over the vidyadharas. Within a few days, because of this knowledge, the progress of his mind was restrained and he approached the feet of Shesha, the god of the gods. He was as white as the fibre of a lotus. He was attired in blue garments. His diadem, armlets, belt and bracelets sparkled. His smiling face had red eyes. He saw the lord, surrounded by a circle of lords among the Siddhas. On seeing him, all his sins were destroyed. Assured, and with the sins inside him destroyed, the sage [587] approached the original being, his body hair standing up in delight. His devotion was enhanced and tears of love flowed down from his eyes. He bowed down. Drops of tears of affection repeatedly moistened the spot where Uttamashloka’s lotus feet rested. Obstructed by his affection, the letters [588] could not emerge. For a long period of time, he was unable to praise him. He then used his mind to control his intelligence. Having got his power of speech back, he spoke. He controlled all his senses and restrained them from wandering around outside. He spoke to the preceptor of the universe, the embodied form of all the Satvata texts.

‘Chitraketu said, “O unconquerable one! You have been conquered by virtuous ones who have conquered their atmans and are impartial in their intelligence. And you have conquered those who worship you, desiring nothing for themselves. Because of your great compassion, you bestow yourself. O illustrious one! Indeed, the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe and everything else is a result of your powers. The various creators of the universe are portions of your portions. In vain, they think of themselves as distinct and seek to rival each other. Though you have no beginning, middle and end, you exist in the beginning, middle and end of everything, from a paramanu to the greatest of the great. You are permanent and exist in the beginning, middle and end of all existences. The cosmic egg is covered by seven sheaths, the earth and the others, [589] each sheath ten times the size of the preceding sheath. Crores and crores of such eggs appear like anus on your head. [590] Therefore, you are Ananta. [591] Men who

thirst above material objects are animals. They worship divinities other than you. O lord! However, with the destruction of those divinities, those benedictions are also destroyed, just as royal lineages disappear. Your atman is full of knowledge and you are not affected by the gunas. O supreme one! Even if you are worshipped because the intelligence craves for the satisfaction of desires, this becomes like fried seeds. [592] You do not possess the gunas, nor the nets of duality. O unvanquished one! You spoke about the unmatched Bhagavata dharma and vanquished everyone. For the sake of liberation, there are sages who do not desire material objects and find delight in the atman. They worship you through this. Following this, men do not have perverse intelligence and notions like 'you', 'I', 'mine', 'yours' and similar things. Those who are perverse in intelligence and impure follow many kinds of adharma that are perishable. If a dharma harms one's own self and others, what can be achieved through that? What benefit can accrue to one's own self or to others? If one causes injury to one's own self and angrily causes harm to others, it is adharma. You spoke about your own vision in Bhagavata dharma and it never fails. Those who worship you, without any sense of differentiation between the large number of mobile and immobile objects, are noble. O illustrious one! On seeing you, it is inevitable that all the sins of men should be destroyed. On hearing your name only once, even someone like a pukkasa [593] is liberated from samsara. O illustrious one! On beholding you, our reservoirs of impurities have been cleansed. How can the words spoken by the divine rishi [594] be rendered false? O Ananta! You know everything that people do in this world. You are the atman of the universe. There is nothing that the supreme preceptor needs to be informed about. That would be like fireflies conveying something to the sun. O illustrious one! I bow down before you. You are the lord behind all creation, preservation and destruction in the universe. You are supremely pure. Bad yogis, who base themselves on duality, find it impossible to comprehend the progress of your atman. All the others breathe when the creator of the universe breathes. They can perceive only when your consciousness perceives. The earth's globe is like a mustard seed on your head. I bow down before the illustrious one who has one thousand hoods."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'The illustrious Ananta was praised in this way. O extender of the Kuru lineage! Delighted, he spoke to Chitraketu, the lord of the vidyadharas.

'The illustrious one said, "Narada and Angiras instructed you by imparting knowledge to you. O king! Using that, you have become successful and have seen me. I am in all living beings. I am in the atmans of all living beings. I am the creator of all living beings. I am the sound of the supreme brahman and both Brahma and the brahman are my eternal bodies. The worlds expand in the atman and the atman is spread throughout the worlds. I pervade them both and I am the cause behind both of them. When a man is in deep sleep, he sees the universe within his own self. When he wakes up from his sleep, he finds that he is alone in some specific place. In that way, know that the state of wakefulness for the jivatman is only maya that results from the paramatman, which should be remembered as the witness. When a man is asleep, it is the atman that he regards as his own self. Know me to be the bliss that is the nirguna brahman. Know me to be the atman. A man should remember both types of consciousness, that when asleep and that when awake. That is knowledge of the supreme brahman, which pervades both of them and extends beyond. When a man forgets my real nature, he thinks of himself as different from the atman. He then roams around in samsara, from one body to another body and from one death to another death. If a person has obtained birth as a human being in this world, where acquiring of both jnana and vijnana is possible and does not still realize the atman, he can never find peace. In this world, he should remember the great hardships when the fruits of deeds are contrary. [595] A wise person's resolution turns towards withdrawal from the fruits. [596] That is the way one can attain fearlessness. A couple undertakes rites so that there is happiness and freedom from unhappiness. However, happiness does not result through this path. Nor is there a cessation of unhappiness. Men who pride themselves on being learned understand the nature of these perverse results and realizing the subtle nature of the atman, transcend the three states. [597] Through direct perception, on the basis of instructions and using their own energy, they are freed from material objects. Satisfied with jnana and vijnana, a man should

be devoted to me. In this way, men who are auspicious in their intelligence use yoga to achieve what is good for them. They use all possible means to know the supreme atman. O king! Without any distraction, if you devotedly accept my words, you will possess jnana and vijnana and, nurturing these, swiftly achieve success."'

Shri-Shuka said, 'The illustrious one, the preceptor of the universe, comforted Chitraketu in this way. While he looked on, Hari, the atman of the universe, instantly vanished from the spot.'

Chapter 6(17)

Shri-Shuka said, 'The vidyadhara, Chitraketu, bowed down in the direction in which Ananta had disappeared. He then started to travel through the sky. The great yogi was praised by sages, Siddhas and charanas and his strength and senses were unimpeded. He travelled for a thousand million years in the valley of the Indra among kulachalas, [598] the place which satisfies all the wishes of the Siddhas. He sported himself and made the vidyadhara women chant the praise of lord Hari. Once, he was travelling on a radiant vimana given to him by Vishnu. He saw Girisha, surrounded by Siddhas and charanas. In the presence of the sages, he was embracing the goddess, who was seated on his lap. In the hearing of the goddess, he approached close and laughed and spoke. Chitraketu said, "This is the preceptor of the worlds. For all embodied beings, he is the one who himself speaks about dharma. In the forefront of the assembly, he is coupled with his wife. He has matted hair and performs fierce austerities. He is the lord of an assembly of people who speak about the brahman. But like a shameless and ordinary person, he has his wife on his lap. In general, even ordinary people embrace their wives in private. However, this one follows great vows and embraces a woman in an assembly." O king! Hearing this, the illustrious one, unfathomable in his intelligence, smiled. But he was silent, as were all his followers in that assembly. He [599] did not know about his valour and

spoke in this way, words that were extremely inappropriate. Proud that he had been able to control his atman, he was shameless.

'The goddess, Parvati, angrily spoke. "How has this person now become the controller, lord and chastiser of the worlds? Can he restrain wicked and shameless people like us? The one born from the lotus [600] does not know about dharma. Nor do Brahma's sons, Bhrigu, Narada and the others. Nor do the Kumaras, [601] Kapila and Manu. They have not restrained Hara, the transgressor. He [602] is the preceptor of the universe and his lotus feet are meditated upon. He is himself the most auspicious among the auspicious. Yet, this *kshatra-bandhu* [603] transgresses the gods. Therefore, this insolent one deserves to be punished and must be chastised. He does not deserve to approach Vaikuntha's feet, which is worshipped by virtuous people. His intelligence is insolent. O evil-minded one! Go and take birth in the wicked species of asuras. O son! You will then no longer cause any offence to great people." Thus cursed, Chitraketu descended from his vimana. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! He bowed his head down and propitiated Sati. [604] Chitraketu said, "O Ambika! I join my hands in salutation and accept your curse. Everything that the gods say about a mortal person has already been determined by destiny. Confounded by ignorance, a living being roams around in the cycle of samsara. Everywhere, he always experiences both happiness and unhappiness. He, or someone else, is not the cause behind happiness and unhappiness. In this case, he ignorantly takes himself, or someone else to be the doer. In this flow of gunas, what is a curse and what is a favour? What is heaven and what is hell? What is happiness and what is unhappiness? Through his own maya, the illustrious one alone creates all beings. For him, this bondage, liberation, happiness and unhappiness are all pointless. There is no one whom he loves or hates. He has no relatives or friends. There is no one who is his own. Nor is there anyone who is not his own. He is impartial towards everyone and indifferent. He experiences neither happiness, nor attachment. How can he be enraged? Nevertheless, he uses his powers to create all these embodied beings for the sake of happiness, unhappiness, well-being, misfortune, bondage, liberation, birth and death, envisaging the cycle of samsara. O wrathful one! I will not seek your

favours for the sake of being freed from the curse. O Sati! However, pardon me for what you have taken to be inappropriate speech." O destroyer of enemies! Thus, Chitraketu pleased the two Girishas. [605] While they were surprised and looked on, he left on his own vimana.

'While the celestial rishis, daityas, Siddhas and attendants heard, the illustrious Rudra spoke to Rudrani. [606] Rudra said, "O one with the excellent hips! You have witnessed the greatness of those who are the servants of the servants of Hari, the one who is extraordinary in deeds. Those great-souled ones are without desire. All of them are devoted to Narayana and are never frightened. They look upon heaven, hell and liberation as being equal. Because of the lord's pastimes, those who have bodies come into contact with bodies and experience the opposite sentiments—happiness and unhappiness, birth and death, curse and boon. A person who does not have a sense of discrimination himself creates these kinds of differentiation. Differences of good and bad are imagined and created, just as a garland is fashioned. When men possess devotion towards the illustrious Vasudeva, because of the strength of knowledge and detachment, nothing is no longer desired or sought after. I, Virinchi, Kumara, [607] Narada, Brahma's sons, the sages and the lords of the gods do not know a part of the parts of what his intentions are. Those who pride themselves on being separate lords do not know his true form. There is nothing that he likes, there is nothing that he does not like. There is no one who is his own. There is no one who is not his own. His atman is in all living beings. Hari loves all living beings. The immensely fortunate Chitraketu is his beloved follower. Achyuta looks upon everyone impartially. He is tranquil. He [608] is loved by him and so am I. Therefore, I do not wonder at what such great-souled persons do. Those who are devoted to the great being are serene and impartial towards everyone." O king! Having heard what the illustrious Shiva said, the goddess lost her sense of wonder and became tranquil. The illustrious one's devotee [609] was capable of cursing the goddess back. However, following the traits of a virtuous person, he did not do so and accepted her curse on his head. He accepted birth as a danava and was born from Tvashta's *dakshinagni* fire. He possessed jnana and vijnana and was famous as Vritra. I have thus told you

everything that you had asked me about. I have also described how Vritra, whose mind was on the illustrious one, was born as an asura. This is the sacred history of the great-souled Chitraketu. If a person hears about this greatness of Vishnu's devotees, he is freed from bondage. If a person gets up in the morning and faithfully recites this history, remembering Hari, he obtains the supreme destination.'

Chapter 6(18)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Prishni, Savita's wife, had three daughters—Savitri, Vyahriti and Trayi. Her sons were Agnihotra, Pashu, Soma, Chaturmasya and the great sacrifices. [610] O dear one! Siddhi, Bhaga's wife, had the sons Mahiman, Vibhu and Prabhu. She also gave birth to a beautiful daughter who was firm in her vows. Her name was Ashis. From among Dhatri's wives, progressively, Kuhu gave birth to Sayam, Sinivali gave birth to Darsha, Raka gave birth to Prata and Anumati gave birth to Purnamasa. [611] Through Kriya, Samantara had the fire gods known as Purishyas. [612] Through Charshani, Bhrigu was born again as Varuna's son. [613] The great yogi, Valmiki, was born through a termite hill. [614] The two rishis, Agastya and Vasishtha, were the sons of Mitra and Varuna. When they saw Urvashi, they swiftly deposited their semen in a pot. [615] Through Revati, Mitra had the sons Utsarga, Arishta and Pippala. O son! We have heard that through Poulami, the lord Indra had three sons—Jayanta, Rishabha and Midhusha as the third. Using his maya, the god Urukrama assumed the form of a dwarf. Through his wife, Kirti, he had a son named Brihacchloka, who in turn, had sons, Soubhaga and the others. I will later describe how this great-souled son of Kashyapa descended as Aditi's son and his deeds, qualities and valour. [616]

'I will now recount Kashyapa's sons through Diti. Among them were the prosperous devotees of the illustrious one, Prahlada and Bali. Diti had two sons who were worshipped by daityas and danavas. Their names are famous as Hiranyakashipu and Hiranyaksha. Hiranyakashipu's daughter was the

danava lady named Kayadhu. She was Jambha's daughter and gave birth to four sons—Samhlada as the eldest, Anuhlada, Hlada and Prahlada. Their sister was named Simhika. She married Viprachitti and had a son named Rahu. While he was drinking the amrita, Hari severed his head with his chakra. Kriti, Samhlada's wife, had Panchajana as a son. Dhamani, Hlada's wife, had Vatapi and Ilvala as her sons. To serve Agastya as a guest, it was Ilvala who cooked Vatapi. Through Surmya, Anuhlada had the sons Bashkala and Mahisha. Prahlada's son was Virochana. Through Devi, Virochana had a son named Bali. Through Ashana, Bali had one hundred sons and Bana was the eldest. Through excellent shlokas, we will later describe his praiseworthy character. [617] Bana worshipped Girisha and became the chief among his attendants. Even now, the illustrious one [618] is still by his side and is the protector of his city. The forty-nine Maruts were the sons of Diti. All of them were without offspring. Indra took them and made them his own.'

The king asked, 'O preceptor! Their nature was that of asuras and that is how they were born. How did Indra accept them and make them his own? Did they perform any auspicious deeds? I, and all the brahmana rishis, are eager to know about this. O illustrious one! You should explain it to us.'

Suta said, 'O Shounaka! Badarayana's son heard Vishnurata's words. They were brief, but full of meaning. The omniscient one praised them and delighted in his mind, addressed him in this way.'

Shri-Shuka said, 'To help Shakra, Vishnu killed Diti's sons. [619] She blazed in grief and rage. Inflamed, she started to think. "The hard-hearted one [620] is addicted to his senses and is wicked. He has slain his brothers. [621] After having brought about his death, how will I lie down in peace? This body, known as a lord, is also known as worms, excrement and ashes. [622] He has caused injury to beings. He does not know what is good for him and will go to hell. He is foolish in intelligence and thinks of this body as permanent. I must certainly have a son who will dry up Indra's insolence." With these sentiments, she constantly did what would bring her husband pleasure. With humility, self-control and love, she served him. O king! Knowing his mind, she charmed his mind with great devotion, sweet words,

smiles and sidelong glances. Though he was learned and in control of his mind, he was thus enchanted by a woman. This is the wonderful nature of women. Unable to resist, he agreed to what she said. At the beginning of creation, Prajapati saw that beings were not attached. From one half of his own body, he created women, so that the intelligence of men could be taken away. O son! The illustrious Kashyapa was thus served by the woman. Extremely happy, he smiled and, applauding Diti, spoke these words. Kashyapa said, "O one with the beautiful thighs! I am pleased with you. O unblemished one! Ask for a boon. When a husband is extremely delighted with his wife, what desire cannot be accomplished in this world or the next? It has been said that the husband is the supreme divinity for a woman. Vasudeva is Shri's husband and is in the minds of all creatures. His signs of divinity are thought of in many names and forms, and men worship the illustrious one through these. However, women worship him in the forms of their husbands. O one with the excellent waist! Therefore, women who desire their own well-being are devoted to their husbands. With single-minded attention, they worship their husbands, since they are the lord's forms. O fortunate one! I have been faithfully worshipped by you with that kind of sentiment. I will hence accomplish your desire, which is extremely difficult for unchaste women to obtain." Diti replied, "O brahmana! If you wish to grant me a boon, I want a son who will kill Indra and will be immortal. He has killed my sons and I am a lady whose sons have been slain." Hearing her words, the brahmana was distressed and lamented. "Alas! A great adharma has presented itself before me today. Alas! I have become addicted to the gratification of the senses, to this world and to the charms of a woman. That has robbed me of my senses. Wretched that I am, I will certainly descend into hell. In this world, women follow their own nature and she has committed no crime. Shame on me. I do not know what is good for me. I have not been able to conquer my senses. A woman's face is like a blooming autumn lotus. Her words are like nectar to the ear. But her heart is as sharp as a razor. Who knows what she is trying to do? No one is loved by a woman. But to accomplish her own wishes, she will easily pretend that. She can kill her husband, her son or her brother, or cause them to be killed. But I have given

her my word and my words should not be false. Indra should not be killed. Therefore, I must think of an appropriate means." O descendant of the Kuru lineage! Marichi's illustrious son thought in this way. Slightly angry with himself and condemning himself, he spoke.

'Kashyapa said, "O fortunate one! You will have a son and he will be a friend to those who are not gods. However, you will have to properly undertake a vow for one year."

'Diti replied, "O brahmana! I will observe the vow. Tell me what I must do. What is prohibited? What results in the vow being broken?"

'Kashyapa said, "You must not cause injury to any being. You will not curse. Nor will you utter a falsehood. You will not pare your nails or cut your hair. You will not touch anything that is impure. You must not bathe by entering the water. You will not be angry. You will not speak with wicked people. You will not wear unwashed garments. You will never wear a garland that has been worn earlier. You will not eat leftovers. You will not eat food offered to the goddess Chandika. You will not eat meat, or food that has been brought by a vrishala. You will not eat food that has been seen by a woman in her menstrual period. You will not drink water from your cupped hands. After eating, you must rinse your mouth with water. When it is evening, your hair must not be loose. You will not go out without wearing ornaments, or without covering yourself. You will be restrained in speech. Without washing your feet, you will not sleep. You will not sleep with your feet wet. You will not lie down with your head facing the north or the west. You will not lie down with others, naked, or during the two sandhyas. You will always wear washed garments and be pure. Before breakfast, with all the auspicious objects, you must worship cattle, brahmanas, Shri and Achyuta. With garlands, fragrances, offerings and ornaments, you will worship women who have sons and husbands who are alive. You must serve and worship your husband and meditate that it is he who is in your womb. In this way, without any deviation, you must observe the pumsavana [623] vow for one year. If you can sustain this, you will have a son who will kill Shakra."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'O king! The great-minded Diti agreed to this. She conceived through Kashyapa and started to rigidly observe the vow. O one who grants honours! Indra got to know what his mother's sister intended. The wise one went to Diti's hermitage and started to tend to her. From time to time, he always brought her flowers, fruits, roots, kindling, kusha grass, leaves, sprouts, earth and water from the forest. O king! She was observing her vow and Hari [624] sought for a violation of the vow. Searching, he served her deceitfully, like a hunter of deer disguised in the form of deer. O lord of the earth! However, though he was intent, he could not detect any weaknesses. Shakra was overcome by deep thoughts. "How can I ensure my well-being?" Once, during the evening, she was exhausted from having observed the vow and was confounded by destiny. After eating, she went to sleep without having rinsed her mouth and without having washed her feet with water. When she was unconscious and asleep, Shakra detected the opportunity. He was a lord of yoga. Using yoga maya, he entered Diti's womb. Using his vajra, he severed the foetus, which had the complexion of gold, into seven parts. When it repeatedly cried, he said, "Do not cry," and sliced each of the fragments into seven pieces each. O king! While they were being struck, all of them joined their hands in salutation and said, "O Indra! Why are you killing us? We are your brothers, the Maruts." [625] Koushika [626] saw that the large number of Maruts were devoted to him. He replied, "O brothers! Do not be scared. You will be with me." He made them his companions. Because of Shrinivasa's [627] compassion, the foetus in Diti's womb didn't die, though it was sliced into many bits by the vajra weapon, just as you were saved from the weapon of Drona's son. Diti worshipped Hari for a little less than a year. If a man worships the original being even once, he goes to a place where he has the same form as the illustrious one. Together with Indra, the Maruts became fifty gods. [628] Hari removed their maternal taint and gave them a right to drink soma. When she arose, [629] Diti saw those sons, who were like the sun in their radiance. They were with Indra and the unblemished lady was satisfied. She told Indra, "O son! I performed this extremely difficult vow because I desired a son whom the Adityas would find to be terrible. I wished to have one son. How have I got forty-

nine? O son! If you know the truth, tell me. Do not lie." Indra replied, "O mother! Discerning your intention, I approached you. I disregarded dharma and pursued what was good for me. I sought for a weakness and, finding it, I severed the foetus. I severed the foetus into seven parts and they became seven sons. I severed each of these into seven more parts, but they did not die. Having witnessed this extraordinary event, I came to the conclusion that this secondary success must have come about through worshipping the great being. [630] Those who worship the illustrious one without desiring any objective in this world, or wishing for something in the next world, are said to be accomplished in pursuing what is best for them. The divinity who is the lord of the universe is part of one's own atman and bestows his own atman. After worshipping him, which learned person will wish to be touched by the gunas? Those are also available in hell. O great lady! I committed this wicked act out of foolishness. O mother! You should pardon me. It is good fortune that the dead foetus has come back to life." She was satisfied with Indra's pure sentiments and gave him permission to leave. Taking the Maruts with him, the lord went to heaven. I have thus told you everything that you had asked me about, including the auspicious birth of the Maruts. What else shall I tell you?'

Chapter 6(19)

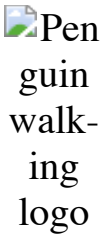
The king asked, 'O brahmana! You have spoken about the pumsavana vow, through which, Vishnu is pleased. I wish to know about it.'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'With the permission of her husband, a woman must start this vow on the first day of shukla paksha in the month of Margashirsa. [631] It yields all the objects of desire. She must hear about the birth of the Maruts and invite brahmanas. She must bathe and clean her teeth, attiring herself in two white pieces of garment thereafter. She must adorn herself with ornaments. Before breakfast, she must worship the illustrious one and Shri. "O one who expects nothing! O one who has accomplished all his desires! I bow down before you. You are the lord of all the great opulence. I

bow down before the one who has accomplished all objectives. O lord! You possess the qualities of compassion, power, energy, greatness, and everything else. You are the illustrious lord. O Vishnu's wife! You possess great maya. You possess the signs of a great being. O immensely fortunate one! Please be pleased with me. O mother of the worlds! I bow down before you. Oum! I bow down before the illustrious great being who is great in his sentiments. O husband of the one with great opulence! O one with great opulence! I am rendering you these offerings." Every day, controlling oneself, Vishnu must be invoked with this mantra and with *arghya*, *padya,* water, bath, garments, the sacred thread, ornaments, fragrances, flowers, incense, lamps, food and other such objects. [632] Whatever is left of the offerings must be offered as oblations into the fire twelve times, with the mantra, "Oum! I bow down before the illustrious and great being, the lord of great opulence. Svaha." [633] If one desires boons and benedictions and all kinds of prosperity, one must always devotedly worship the two divinities, Shri and Vishnu. Humble in intelligence, she must prostrate herself on the ground, like a rod. Thereafter, she must chant this mantra ten times. "You are the lords of the entire universe and the supreme cause behind the universe. This is subtle Prakriti and the power of her maya is extremely difficult to overcome. You are yourself her lord and the supreme being. You are all the sacrifices, while she is the act of sacrificing. You are the one who enjoys the fruits. This goddess is the manifestation of the gunas, while you cause that manifestation and enjoy the gunas. You are the atman in all living bodies. Shri is the body, the senses and the mind. The illustrious one [634] represents the names and forms, while you are their support and cause their manifestation. You two are the supreme lords and the granters of boons in the three worlds. O Uttamashloka! Therefore, let my great desires be successful." Along with Shri, Shrinivasa, the granter of boons, must thus be worshipped. Thereafter, having removed the objects of worship, she must worship again with offerings of water. [635] With a humble mind, she must devotedly worship, using the *stotram* [636] mentioned. Having inhaled what is left of what was offered into the fire, she must worship Hari again. With great devotion in her mind, she must worship her husband as an aspect of the great being.

Her own husband, who is loving towards her, will lovingly help in all the rites undertaken by his wife, great or small. From the couple, it is sufficient if one person undertakes the worship. If the wife is unable, [637] the husband must control himself and undertake it. When one is undertaking this vow to Vishnu, one must never break it. Every day, with devotion, she must worship brahmanas and women who have surviving husbands and sons, with garlands, fragrances, offerings and ornaments. She must also adhere to the rituals and worship the god. Thereafter, after requesting the god to leave for his abode, she must eat what had been offered to him earlier, for the sake of her purification and prosperity and the accomplishment of all desires. This mode of worship must be followed for a period of twelve months. After one year has passed, the virtuous lady must fast on the last day in the month of Kartika. [638] When it is the morning of the next day, she must touch water and as earlier, worship Krishna. According to the ordinances of *paka-yajna*, [639] boiled milk must be mixed with charu and *ghee* and the husband must offer this, twelve times, into the fire. Thereafter, he must bow his head down before the brahmanas and accept the benedictions they happily pronounce. With their permission, he must faithfully eat. Controlled in his speech, he must feed the preceptor and his relatives. After that, for the sake of excellent offspring and excellent fortune, the wife will eat what is left of the charu. If a man follows this vow in the proper way, he obtains everything that he desires from the lord. A woman receives good fortune, prosperity, offspring, a long life for her husband, fame and a house. A maiden who does not have a husband obtains a husband with all the signs and a destination that is free of sin. A woman whose sons have died obtains sons who will remain alive. She also becomes the mistress of riches. An extremely unfortunate woman obtains good fortune. One without beauty obtains great beauty. A diseased person becomes free of disease, obtaining health and a full complement of senses in the body. If one recites this when auspicious acts are undertaken, the gods and the ancestors are satisfied. When the oblations are over, if they are satisfied, the fire god, Shri and Hari confer all the objects of desire. O king! This is the great and auspicious account of the birth of the Maruts and Diti's vow. I have described it to you.'

This ends the Sixth Skandha.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Seventh Skandha

Chapter 7(1): 47 shlokas
Chapter 7(2): 63 shlokas
Chapter 7(3): 38 shlokas
Chapter 7(4): 46 shlokas
Chapter 7(5): 57 shlokas
Chapter 7(6): 30 shlokas
Chapter 7(7): 55 shlokas
Chapter 7(8): 56 shlokas
Chapter 7(9): 55 shlokas
Chapter 7(10): 71 shlokas
Chapter 7(11): 35 shlokas
Chapter 7(12): 31 shlokas
Chapter 7(13): 46 shlokas
Chapter 7(14): 42 shlokas
Chapter 7(15): 80 shlokas

Chapter 7(1)

The king asked, 'The illustrious one is himself impartial in his love and is fraternal towards all creatures. For Indra's sake, why was he partial, killing the daityas? In his atman, he is himself all that is beneficial and should not accomplish the task of the large number of gods alone. Nor should he harbour enmity towards the asuras. He is without gunas and does not suffer from any anxiety. O extremely fortunate one! Therefore, a great doubt has arisen in me about Narayana's attributes and you should dispel it.'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'O great king! You have asked a good question about Hari's wonderful conduct. The glory of the illustrious one enhances devotion towards the illustrious one. His supreme account is chanted about by Narada and the other rishis. After bowing down before the sage Krishna, [640] I will tell you about Hari's account. He is without gunas and without a beginning. He is not manifest. The illustrious one is superior to Prakriti. Using his own maya, he enters the gunas and causes obstructions against those who cause obstructions. [641] Sattva, rajas and tamas are the attributes of Prakriti and not of the atman. O king! There is no simultaneous increase or decrease in them. According to the guna appropriate for the time, when sattva dominates, the gods and the rishis triumph. When it is rajas, the asuras do so. When it is tamas, the yakshas and the rakshasas do so. The aggregate of fire and the other elements appear as distinct. However, wise and perceptive ones know him as the atman that is within their own atmans. [642] When the supreme atman desires to create bodies, he uses his own maya to create rajas and makes it act. Desiring to act, the lord creates sattva in different forms. When he wishes to withdraw, he creates tamas. O god among men! The lord is the refuge of time. He creates it and makes it move. He is the foremost being and ensures that truth is followed. O king! When sattva dominates, the lord of time indeed seems to be favourable towards the armies of the gods. He loves the gods. Therefore, the one who is extensive in fame destroys the counter armies of the asuras, since rajas and tamas predominate in them. In this connection, the divine rishi [643] happily recited an ancient account, when he was asked by Ajatashatru at the great sacrifice. [644] At that great royal sacrifice, the king witnessed the marvellous incident of the lord of Chedi merging into the body of the illustrious Vasudeva. [645] The divine rishi was seated there, at the sacrifice. The king who was Pandu's son was surprised in his mind. Therefore, in the presence of all the sages, he asked.

'Yudhishthira asked, "This is extremely wonderful and is something that even those who are single-minded in devotion find impossible to achieve. The lord of Chedi hated him. Yet, he merged into Vasudeva's true nature. O sage! All of us desire to know about this. Vena reviled the illustrious one

and was brought down by the brahmanas. [646] Even when he was an infant with faltering words, Damaghosha's son was wicked. [647] Even now, he was intolerant towards Govinda and so was the evil-minded Dantavakra. [648] Both of them repeatedly abused Vishnu, the supreme and undecaying brahman. Why did white leprosy not appear on their tongues? Why did they not become blind and plunge into darkness? While all the worlds looked on, how were they easily absorbed into the refuge that is the illustrious one? This is something that is extremely difficult to obtain. My intelligence is flickering on this account, like a lamp before the wind. O illustrious one! Tell me the reason behind this extraordinary incident."'

Shri-Shuka said, 'The illustrious rishi, Narada, heard the king's words. Pleased, he spoke to him and also made everyone in the assembly hear the account.

'Narada replied, "O king! Censure and praise and honour and dishonour are for this body. Those without discrimination have thought of this difference between Purusha and Prakriti. O lord of the earth! Violence, pride, punishment and harsh words are misconceptions experienced by beings, because of notions of 'I' and 'mine'. As long as one is bound to misconceptions, the destruction of the body is identified with the destruction of the one who resides in it. That is not true of those who have a conception of the absolute, the atman who resides everywhere. He is the supreme chastiser, who punishes because chastisement is due, not because he likes violence. Therefore, whether it is because of firm enmity, devotion, fear, affection or desire, as long as one somehow engages with him, he does not treat these differentially. Through firm enmity, a mortal person can become immersed in him, even more than one can through bhakti yoga. That is my considered view. A worm may be confined inside a hole in a wall by a wasp. [649] Because of the fear and rage, it thinks about it and assumes that form. [650] The illustrious lord uses his maya to appear in human form as Krishna. Driven by enmity, they think of him and cleanse their souls. They are many whose minds have been absorbed in the lord because of desire, hatred, fear, love and devotion. They gave up their sins and attained that destination. O lord! The *gopi*s [651] did it through desire, Kamsa through fear, the lord of Chedi

and other kings through hatred, the Vrishnis through affection and you [652] through devotion. Vena was attached to Purusha through any of these five means. Therefore, through whatever means, the mind must be immersed in Krishna. O Pandava! The lord of Chedi and Dantavakra were the sons of your mother's sisters. [653] They were the foremost among Vishnu's attendants. However, they were dislodged from that position because of the curse of brahmanas."

'Yudhishthira asked, "How did this happen? Whose curse could affect Hari's servants? It seems to be inconceivable that those close to Hari should be born in this way. Those who reside in Vaikuntha's city are devoid of the body, the senses and the breath of life. You should explain how they came to be bound in an association with the body."

'Narada replied, "Once upon a time, Brahma's sons, Sanandana and the others, were roaming around the three worlds, as they pleased, and went to Vishnu's world. They had been born before the elders. [654] However, their appearance was like children who were five or six years old. They were naked. Taking them to be children, the two gatekeepers [655] prevented their entry. Angry, they cursed, 'The two of you do not deserve to reside here. The feet of Madhu's enemy [656] are free of rajas and tamas. But you are foolish. Therefore, quickly go and assume the wicked species of asuras.' Thus cursed, they started to fall down from their own abodes. However, those compassionate ones [657] said, 'You will again return to your world after three births.' Those two were born as Diti's sons and were revered by daityas and danavas. Hiranyakashipu was older and Hiranyaksha was younger. In his *narasimha* form, [658] Hari killed Hiranyakashipu. Assuming the form of a boar, he raised the earth and killed Hiranyaksha. Hiranyakashipu's son, Prahlada, loved Keshava. Desiring to kill him, he [659] thought of many different kinds of death and injury. But he was serene and impartial, realizing that his atman existed in all creatures. Since he was touched by the illustrious one's energy, all these efforts could not kill him. Thereafter, these two were born as the sons of Vishrava and Keshini. These two, Ravana and Kumbhakarna, tormented all the worlds. O lord! To free them from the curse, he [660] was born in the form of Raghava. You will hear about Rama's

valour from Markandeya's lips. Thereafter, these two were born as kshatriyas, the sons of your mother's sisters. Slain by Krishna's chakra, they have now been freed from the curse. They were bound by fierce enmity and thought of Achyuta's glory. They have now again been conveyed to Hari's side and have become Vishnu's attendants."

'Yudhishthira asked, "How did he [661] come to hate his beloved and great-souled son? O illustrious one! Also tell me about Prahlada's devotion to Achyuta."'

Chapter 7(2)

'Narada said, "O king! When Hari adopted the form of a boar and killed his brother, Hiranyakashipu grieved and was tormented by rage. He bit his lips in anger. With his eyes blazing in wrath, he looked at the sky, which seemed to be full of smoke. His teeth were terrible and his glance was fierce. His eyebrows were furrowed and his face was impossible to look at. In an assembly of danavas, he raised his trident and spoke these words. 'O danavas and daityas! O Dvimurdha! [662] O three-eyed Shambara! O Shatabahu! [663] O Hayagriva! [664] O Namuchi! O Paka! O Ilvala! O Viprachitti! O Puloma! O Shakuna and the others! Listen to my words. After that, all of you swiftly do what has to be done. Do not delay. My beloved well-wisher and brother has been slain by inferior enemies. [665] Though Hari should be impartial, he has taken the side of those who worship him. He has given up his own nature and has used his contemptible maya to assume the form of a resident of the forest. [666] Like a child, he has favoured those who worship him. He has been fickle. I will sever his neck with my trident and make copious quantities of blood flow, so that I can satisfy my brother, who thirsted after blood. My distress will also be relieved. The residents of heaven owe their life to Vishnu. When that deceitful and harmful one has been destroyed, it will be as if the root of a tree has been severed and the branches will dry up. While I do this, all of you go to earth, rendered prosperous by the brahmanas and the kshatriyas. Destroy those engaged in austerities, sac-

rifices, studies, vows and donations. Vishnu's foundations are based on the rites performed by brahmanas. That being is based on sacrifices and dharma. He is the refuge for the gods, the rishis, the ancestors, beings and dharma. Go to the habitations where there are brahmanas, cattle, the Vedas and the rites of varnas and ashramas. Burn those down and cut down the trees.' Thus instructed by their master, they lowered their heads and accepted the command. Delighted at the prospect of carnage, they created devastation among the subjects. They burnt down cities, villages, pastures, groves, fields, pleasure grounds, hermitages, mines, settlements of farmers, settlements in the foothills and settlements of cowherds. Some used digging implements to shatter bridges, ramparts and the gates of cities. Some wielded axes in their hands and severed trees that provided means of subsistence. Others used blazing torches to burn down the homes of subjects. Thus, the followers of the Indra among daityas repeatedly persecuted the worlds. The gods abandoned heaven and unnoticed, began to roam around on earth.

'"Miserable, Hiranyakashipu performed the funeral rites for his brother. He performed water and other rites and comforted his brother's sons—Shakuni, Shambara, Dhrishta, Bhuta-santapana, Vrika, Kalanabha, Mahanabha, Harishmashru and Utkacha. O lord of men! He knew about what was appropriate for the time and the place. He addressed them, their mother, Rushabhanu, and his own mother, Diti, in the following sweet words. Hiranyakashipu said, 'O mother! O daughters-in-law! O sons! One should not sorrow over a valiant person. When facing the enemy, the death of brave ones is desired and should be praised. O one who is excellent in vows! [667] Like those who gather together at a place where cool drinking water exists, in this world, beings are driven by destiny and congregate at a single place. Because of their own deeds, they are brought together and drift apart. The atman is always pure and without decay. It goes everywhere and knows everything. It is supreme. The atman assumes many different forms and kinds of life. These gunas are created by maya. Trees seem to move [668] when the water moves. Similarly, when the eyes are in a whirl, the ground is seen to move. The gunas cause this agitation in the mind. The atman is not subject to change. O fortunate one! Though it does not possess the signs

of a body, because it assumes the signs of a body, it seems to be agitated. This is the difficulty that the atman confronts. Though it does not possess a physical body, it is identified with the physical body. The agreeable and disagreeable, attachment and detachment, occur in samsara because of karma. Birth, death and many kinds of sorrow are spoken about. These kinds of thoughts occur because of lack of discrimination and because one has forgotten about discrimination. In this connection, an ancient history is recounted. This is about a conversation between Yama and the relatives of a dead person. Listen to it. In the land of Ushinara, there was a king who was famous by the name of Suyajna. When he was slain by the enemies in a battle, his relatives surrounded him. His jewels and armour were strewn around. His ornaments and garlands were dislodged. His heart was pierced by arrows. He was lying down, covered with blood. His hair was dishevelled and his eyes were destroyed. He was still biting his lips in rage. His face, which was like a lotus, was smeared with dust. In the battle, his weapons and arms had been sliced away. Destiny had done this to the king of Ushinara. On seeing the state their husband was in, the queens grieved. They severely struck their breasts with their hands. They repeatedly fell down at his feet and lamented, "O protector! Alas!" They wept loudly, sprinkling their beloved's lotus feet and their breasts, smeared with red kunkuma, with their tears. Their hair and ornaments were dishevelled. They wept and lamented, creating greater sorrow among the people. "O lord! Alas! Vidhatri is cruel. You have been conveyed to a state that is beyond our range of vision. Earlier, you were the one who ensured subsistence for those in Ushinara. You are now increasing their grief. O lord of the earth! You were grateful. You were our well-wisher. How will we exist without you? O brave one! We wish to serve at your feet. Therefore, we will follow you in whatever direction you proceed." Clasping their dead husband, they lamented in this way. Though the sun was setting, they did not wish that the funeral rites should be performed. Yama heard the lamentations of the dead person's relatives. Assuming the form of a boy, he himself arrived there. Yama said, "These people are advanced in age. Despite having seen the ways of the world, they are confused. Men come here and go away from

here. In spite of themselves following the same dharma, they are grieving pointlessly. In this matter, we [669] are more fortunate than them. Though we have been abandoned by our mother and father, we do not worry. We are weak and have not been devoured by wolves and other. He who protected us in the womb, will protect us now. Depending on his wishes, the undecaying lord creates, preserves and destroys. O women! The lord is said to play with mobile and immobile objects. The lord preserves and destroys. Even if something is lost along the road, if it is protected by destiny, it remains there. [670] If it is struck by him, it can be destroyed, even if it is at home. Protected by him, even without a protector, a person may remain alive in a forest. But if struck by him, a person may not live, even if he is protected at home. Depending on karma, at the right time, a creature possesses the body of a species, but this does not last all the time. The atman assumes the gunas of Prakriti, but is distinct from them and is not bound by them. This body of a person is caused by delusion, just as different kinds of elements are seen in a house—water, earthen pots and people. At the right time, it is born and destroyed. The fire is seen to be different from the wood. The breath of life is distinct from the body in which it exists. The sky pervades everything, but is not attached to anything. Like that, the being may resort to all the gunas, but transcends them. O foolish people! You are grieving over Suyajna, who is lying down here. But the one who really heard you and replied to you can never be seen. The chief and foremost breath of life in this body is not the listener or the speaker. This body consists of all the sense organs. However, the atman is different from the breath of life and the body. The atman assumes superior and inferior bodies, with different elements, senses, minds and signs. Through its own energy, it obtains these and gives them up. But it is different from these. As long as the atman possesses these signs, it is bound down by karma. Till such time, there are difficulties and hardships, because one follows the engagement with maya. Conceiving, seeing and thinking about these gunas is futile. Everything that results from the senses is false, like desires satisfied in dreams. It is eternal. Those who know this do not grieve over what is temporary in this world. However, there are those whose nature it is to grieve and they are incapable of acting

against this. There was a fowler who was created as the destroyer of birds in a desolate forest. Here and there, he spread out his net and lured them. He saw a pair of *kulinga* birds [671] wandering around. The female kulinga was suddenly lured by the fowler. O queens! Controlled by destiny, it was trapped in the net there. On seeing it trapped in this state, the male kulinga bird was extremely distressed. Because of its love, it was miserable, unable to do anything. It lamented piteously. 'Alas! Destiny is cruel. The lord does not have compassion towards women. I am miserably lamenting. I am distressed. What will I do? I desire that destiny should also take me away. What will I do when half of me has left? If I remain alive, it will be in misery and sorrow. What will I do with this miserable life? These young ones have still not grown their wings. Without their mother, how will I nurture them? Those unfortunate offspring of their mother are waiting in the nest.' The kulinga bird lamented in this way. Because it was separated from its beloved, its voice choked with tears. The hunter of birds was hidden there. Impelled by destiny, he pierced it with an arrow. O ignorant ones! You are unable to see your own destruction. Even if you grieve over your husband for one hundred years, you will not get him back." When the child spoke in this way, all of them were struck with wonder. All the relatives realized that everything that was manifested was temporary. Having told them this, Yama vanished from the spot. Suyajna's relatives carried out the funeral rites. Therefore, do not grieve for yourselves or for others. In this world, who is one's own? Who is another person? What belongs to one's own self? What belongs to someone else? The perception of mine and someone else's results from ignorance in embodied beings.' Thus, Diti and her daughters-in-law heard the words of the lord of the daityas. They instantly fixed their minds on the truth. She gave up sorrowing on account of her son."'

Chapter 7(3)

'Narada said, "O king! Hiranyakashipu wished to be invincible and immortal, without old age and disease. He wished to be the absolute emperor,

without any rival. In the valley of Mandara, he tormented himself through extremely terrible austerities. He stood on the ground, supporting himself on the big toes of his feet and raised his arms up, looking towards the sky. His matted hair was radiant, like the rays of the sun at the time of universal destruction. While he tormented himself through these austerities, the gods returned to their abodes. Because of the austerities, a fire mixed with smoke issued from his head. This spread everywhere and scorched the upper worlds, the middle worlds and the lower worlds. The rivers and the oceans were agitated. With its dvipas and its mountains, the earth quaked. Together with the planets, the stars fell down and the ten directions were ablaze. Scorched by this, the gods left heaven and went to Brahma's world. They informed the creator, 'O god of the gods! O lord of the universe! Heaven has been scorched by the austerities of the Indra among the daityas and we are incapable of remaining there. O lord! If you so think fit, please arrange for the worlds to be pacified, so that they are not destroyed. O lord! We are the ones who render offerings to you. Indeed, what is the reason behind his performing these extremely difficult austerities? It is not unknown to you. However, please listen. We will submit it to you. "After having used austerities, yoga and meditation to create all the mobile and immobile objects, Parameshthi occupies his own seat. [672] He is in a position where he is the lord of everything. Through austerities, yoga and meditation, I will also enhance my position. Time and the atman are eternal and I will ensure this for myself. [673] Otherwise, I will use my energy to reverse everything, so that nothing is as it used to be before. [674] There is no need to mention other things like the positions occupied by Vaishnavas, which are destroyed by time at the end of a kalpa." [675] We have heard that, firm in his determination, this is the reason he is engaged in supreme austerities. O lord of the three worlds! After this, you should yourself decide on the appropriate course of action. O lord of the universe! Your position as Parameshthi ensures well-being for brahmanas and cattle and fortune and victory for creatures.' O king! The gods told the illustrious one, who had created himself, this.

‘“Surrounded by Bhrigu, Daksha and the others, he went to the hermitage of the lord of the daityas. The one borne on a swan could not see him at first. He was covered in a termite hill, grass and bamboo. Everywhere, the ants had eaten up his fat, skin, flesh and blood. On finally seeing him, he was astounded. Brahma smiled and said, ‘Arise! O fortunate one! O Kashyapa’s descendant! Arise! Your austerities have been successful. I am the granter of boons and have come here. Tell me about the boon that you desire. I have myself witnessed this extremely wonderful wasting away. Your body has been devoured and bitten. Your breath of life seems to reside only in the bones. No rishi has undertaken anything like this in the past, nor will anyone else in the future. Without water, who can sustain his life for one hundred divine years? What you have done is extremely difficult even for spirited ones. O Diti’s son! Because of your devotion to austerities, you have conquered me. O bull among asuras! Therefore, I will give you all the benedictions. For a mortal, the sight of someone who is immortal, like me, cannot be in vain.’ His body had been eaten up by ants. Having said this, the god, who was the first being, used divine water from his water pot to sprinkle him. Its power never failed. From the termite hill and the bamboo, a young man arose, like fire from kindling. He was full of energy and strength. All his limbs were perfect and he was capable of withstanding a vajra. His complexion was like that of molten gold. He saw the god stationed in the sky, with the swan as a mount. He was filled with great delight at the sight and bowed his head down on the ground. He stood up and saw the lord. Full of humility, he joined his hands in salutation. He shed tears of joy and his body hair stood up.

‘“He chanted his praise in faltering words. Hiranyakashipu said, ‘At the end of the kalpa, everything was enveloped in blinding darkness created by time. Through his own radiance and his own illumination, he made the entire universe become manifest. Assuming the three modes of sattva, rajas and tamas, he creates, preserves and destroys. I bow down before the supreme lord. I bow down before the great one. I bow down before the original seed, who has the form of jnana and vijnana. He is the one who makes the breath of life, the senses, mind and intelligence manifest and causes

their transformations. Stationed in one place, you are the one who controls the universe. Through the main prana, you are the lord of subjects. You are the controller of consciousness, intelligence, mind and the senses. You are the lord Mahat. You are the lord of the elements, the gunas and desires. Your body consists of the three Vedas and the seven kinds of sacrifices. [676] You are the knowledge and the four kinds of officiating priests. [677] You alone are the atman. You are the atman in all creatures. You are without beginning and without end. You are the wise atman who is inside everyone. You are unblinking time. You reduce the lifespans of people by *lava* and the other measures. [678] You are the immutable atman. You are the great Parameshthi, who is without birth. You are the atman who causes life in the world of the living. Nothing superior, inferior, mobile and immobile is distinct from you. You are knowledge, arts [679] and all their parts. You are the great Hiranyagarbha, who is beyond the three gunas. O lord! Everything manifest is your gross body. Through this, you enjoy the senses, the breath of life, the mind and the gunas. O Parameshthi! But you are stationed in your own abode. You are the atman who is not manifest. You are the ancient Purusha. Your form is infinite and not manifest. Everything is pervaded by the power of your internal and external consciousness. [680] I bow down before that illustrious one. O supreme among those who grant boons! O lord! If you wish to bestow a boon on me, let my death not come about through any creatures that have been created by you. Let it not happen inside the house or outdoors. Let it not happen during day or night. Let it not occur through weapons. Let it not happen on the ground or in the sky. Let my death not come about through men, animals, those that do not have life, those that have life, gods, asuras and giant serpents. Let me be unmatched in battle and the single lord of embodied beings. Let me be the greatest among all the guardians of the world, just as you are. Let the power of my austerities and yoga never be destroyed.’”’

Chapter 7(4)

‘Narada said, “Shatadhriti was pleased with the austerities and was thus beseeched by Hiranyakashipu. He granted him a boon that was extremely difficult to obtain. Brahma said, ‘O son! You have asked me for a boon that is extremely difficult for men to obtain. O dear one! However, despite it being extremely difficult to obtain, I will bestow it on you.’ The illustrious one, whose favours are inviolate, left after this. He was worshipped by the noble asura and praised by all the lords of the subjects. The daitya obtained the boon and a resplendent and golden body. Remembering the slaying of his brother, he harboured hatred towards the illustrious one. The great asura conquered all the directions and the three worlds. He defeated Siddhas, charanas, vidyadharas, rishis, the lords of the ancestors, Manus, yakshas, rakshasas, pishachas, *preta*s, the lords of bhutas and all living creatures and brought them under his subjugation. He conquered the universe. He usurped the positions of the guardians of the world and their energy. He established himself in heaven and in the prosperous grove of the gods. He occupied the great Indra’s residence, constructed by Vishvakarma himself. The prosperity of the three worlds and all the opulence that existed anywhere resided there. The steps there were made out of coral and the floors out of expensive emeralds. The walls were made out of crystal and the rows of pillars were made out of lapis lazuli. The canopies were wonderful and the seats were encrusted with rubies. The couches were as white as the froth of milk and the spreads were made out of nets of pearls. Here and there, there was the tinkling sound of anklets from women with charming faces and excellent teeth. Their reflections could be seen on floors made out of gems. The immensely strong and great-minded one conquered the worlds and became the single emperor. He sported himself in the great Indra’s residence. The gods were tormented and agitated by his harsh rule and had to bow down at his feet. O dear one! He was intoxicated with strong-smelling liquor and his coppery red eyes rolled around in inebriation. With the exception of the three, [681] everyone worshipped the absolute lord with their hands. He was full of austerities, yoga, strength and energy. O Pandava! The energetic one was established on the great Indra’s throne. Vishvavasu, Tumburu, the other

gandharvas, the Siddhas, I and the other rishis, the vidyadharas and the apsaras had to go before him and repeatedly praise him. Those in the varnas and the ashramas performed sacrifices and rites with copious quantities of dakshina. Through his own energy, he appropriated all the shares of the oblations. Without being tilled, the earth, with its seven dvipas, yielded grain. The space between the earth and the sky was milked for every object of desire. The sky gave him many kinds of wonderful objects. The oceans, made out of salt water, liquor, ghee, sugar cane juice, curds, milk and sweet water, were stores of jewels. They, and their wives, [682] brought him heaps of jewels on their waves. The mountains and their valleys provided him pleasure grounds. The trees provided qualities [683] of all the seasons. Alone, he possessed the separate qualities of all the guardians of the worlds. In this way, he conquered all the directions and became the absolute emperor. As much as he wanted, he enjoyed all the beloved objects of pleasure. However, since he had not conquered his senses, he was not satisfied.

'"He became intoxicated and insolent because of this prosperity and violated the sacred texts. A long period of time passed and the curse of the brahmanas [684] materialized. All the worlds, along with their guardians, were anxious because of the fierce punishment he imposed. Having not been able to find shelter anywhere else, they went and sought refuge with Achyuta. 'I bow down to the direction where the atman, the lord Hari, resides. Having gone to him, pure and tranquil *sannyasi*s do not return.' They controlled themselves and with purified intelligence, meditated on him. Without sleeping and subsisting only on air, they worshipped Hrishikesha. A voice appeared before them. It had no form and rumbled like the clouds. It resounded in all the directions and dispelled the fear of the virtuous. 'O best among the gods! Do not be scared. Everything will be well with you. Having seen me, creatures obtain everything that is beneficial for them. I know about the wicked activities and oppression of this daitya. I will pacify him. Wait for the right time. If a person hates the gods, the Vedas, cattle, brahmanas, virtuous people, dharma and me, he is swiftly destroyed. His own son, Prahlada, is great-souled and serene, with no enmity towards anyone. When he harms him, I will kill him, despite his having obtained a boon.' Thus ad-

dressed by the preceptor of the worlds, the residents of heaven bowed down. Without any anxiety, they returned, thinking that the asura had already been killed.

‘“The lord of the daityas had four wonderful sons. Among them, Prahlada was the greatest in qualities and he worshipped the supreme one. He was devoted to brahmanas and possessed good conduct. He was firm in adhering to the truth and had conquered his senses. He regarded all creatures as his self alone and was their friend and well-wisher. Like a servant, he bowed down at the feet of noble ones. To the distressed, he was as compassionate as a father. Towards equals, he was like a brother. He was gentle towards his superiors and regarded them as his masters. Though he possessed learning, prosperity, beauty and noble birth, he was free of pride and insolence. In times of hardship, his mind was not agitated. He had no attachment for qualities [685] that he saw or heard about. He regarded these as trifles. He was always in control of his senses, breath of life, body and intelligence. All his desires were quietened and restrained. Though an asura, he was unlike an asura. O king! Wise ones repeatedly chant about his great qualities. They have not become obscured even now, just as the illustrious lord is never obscured. O king! When accounts of virtuous ones are chanted, even among enemies like the gods, he is held up as a standard, not to speak of devotees like you. Enough of his innumerable qualities and greatness. Indications are sufficient. He had a natural attachment towards the illustrious Vasudeva. Even as a child, he had cast aside his toys. With his mind absorbed in him, [686] he seemed to be dull. Like a spirit, his atman had been grasped by Krishna. He did not know about this world. Having embraced Govinda, he was not conscious of activities like sitting, roaming around, eating, lying down, drinking and speaking. Sometimes, his senses would be incapacitated and overcome by thoughts about Vaikuntha, he would cry out. Because of such thoughts, he would sometimes laugh. Delighted, he would sometimes sing loudly. Sometimes, he would shout loudly. Without any sense of shame, he would sometimes dance. Sometimes, immersed in thoughts about him, [687] he would try to imitate him. Sometimes, content and withdrawn at his touch, his body hair would stand up and he would be silent. Sometimes,

because of the love and bliss, his eyes would be half-closed and steady, and tears would flow out. He served at Uttamashloka's lotus feet, an association obtained by those who desire nothing else. That supreme bliss expanded in him and he repeatedly calmed the minds of those who were distressed because of bad company. O king! He was a great devotee, immensely fortunate and great-souled. However, Hiranyakashipu tried to harm his own son."

'Yudhishthira asked, "O divine rishi! O one who is excellent in vows! His son was pure and virtuous. Why did the father seek to harm him? We wish to know this. Fathers are devoted to their sons. When sons act in a contrary way, they punish them, so as to educate them. However, one does not harm them, like an enemy. Why would one do this to someone who is obedient, virtuous, treating the father like a divinity? O brahmana! O lord! Please satisfy our curiosity about this. Why did the father hate the son so much that he sought to kill him?"'

Chapter 7(5)

'Narada said, "The asuras chose the illustrious Kavya [688] as their priest. His two sons, Shanda and Amarka, lived near the residence of the king of the daityas. Prahlada was accomplished in good policy. However, the king sent the child to them. They instructed him, as they instructed other asura children. He heard whatever the teachers said and recited it. However, in his mind, he thought that notions of 'friend' and 'enemy' were bad distinctions. O Pandava! Once, the king of the asuras made his son climb on to his lap. He asked, 'O child! What do you think is virtuous? Tell me.' Prahlada replied, 'O noble asura! I do not think it virtuous that the intelligence of embodied beings should be clouded by false notions [689] and that they should always be anxious. The house is like a blind pit that degrades the atman. Abandoning this, one should go to the forest and seek refuge with Hari.' Hearing his son's words, which sided with the enemy, the daitya laughed. 'This is the way the intelligence of children is corrupted by the intelligence

of the enemy. Let the child be properly confined to his preceptor's house. Let brahmanas, who secretly side with Vishnu, not corrupt his intelligence.' When he was brought to their home, the priests of the daityas addressed him in gentle words, pacifying and comforting him. They asked, 'O child! O Prahlada! May you be fortunate. Tell us the truth. Do not lie. How has this perversion in your intelligence come about? This is unlike a child. Has this perversion in intelligence been done by the enemy, or has it happened because of your own nature? O descendant of the lineage! Tell us. Your preceptors desire to hear.' Prahlada replied, '"This is mine." "This belongs to someone else." Maya creates such notions in men. Their intelligence is confounded. I have seen the illustrious one and I bow down before him. When he shows his favours, this animal-like intelligence is destroyed in men. "He is different from me", "I am different from him", such false differences come to an end. The same atman is in him and me. Those with imperfect intelligence find this impossible to comprehend. This can only be determined by worshipping him. Those who speak about the Vedas and follow that path, Brahma and the others, are also confused. He [690] has changed my mind. O brahmanas! In the presence of a magnet, a piece of iron is automatically attracted. In that way, because of his wishes, my mind has been changed by the one who holds a chakra in his hand.' Having told the brahmanas this, the immensely intelligent one stopped. The servants of the king were extremely distressed and angry. They reproached him. 'Let a cane be brought. He is bringing ill fame to us. He is evil-minded and the worst of his lineage. The fourth kind of punishment is indicated for him. [691] He has been born as a tree with thorns in a grove of sandalwood trees that is the lineage of the daityas. This boy is like a handle in an axe that Vishnu wields to sever the roots.' [692] They used many such means to threaten and abuse him. They made Prahlada learn the three objectives of human existence. [693] The preceptors ascertained that he had learnt the four principles. [694]

'"When his mother had bathed and ornamented him, he was presented before the Indra among the daityas. The child fell down at his feet and the asura welcomed him and pronounced his benedictions. For a long time, he embraced him in his arms and felt great relief. He made him sit on his lap

and inhaled the fragrance of his head, sprinkling his smiling face with drops of tears. O Yudhishthira! He spoke to him. Hiranyakashipu said, 'O Prahlada! O son! May you live for a long time. You have spent quite some time in the abode of your preceptors. Tell me something extraordinary that you have learnt from them, or through your own studies.' Prahlada replied, 'There are nine forms of being devoted to Vishnu—hearing about him; chanting his name; remembering Vishnu; serving at his feet; worshipping him; praying to him; servitude to him; friendship; and offering one's entire self. I think that if a man offers himself in this way, he performs devotion towards the illustrious one. This is my supreme learning.' Hearing the words of his son, Hiranyakashipu's lips quivered in rage and he told his preceptor's son, [695] 'O brahma-bandhu! [696] What is this? You have taken the side of the enemy. O evil-minded one! You have shown me disrespect and made the child learn nonsense. In this world, there are wicked people who use their garb to disguise themselves. They are evil friends. They are like sinners. They are like a disease that manifests itself over a period of time.' The preceptor's son said, 'O Indra's enemy! I have not taught your son what he has spoken. Nor has it been taught to him by anyone else. O king! This is his natural intelligence. Control your anger. The blame does not devolve on us.' Answered by the preceptor in this way, the asura spoke to his son again. 'O unfortunate one! Since the preceptor has not taught you this, how has this evil intelligence come upon you?' Prahlada replied, 'The mind does not turn towards Krishna because of what one does or because of what someone else does. Nor does it develop from the combined efforts of those who follow the vows of householders. It does not develop in those who are unable to control their senses. Instead, they are plunged into darkness and repeatedly chew what has been chewed before. [697] Those who pursue selfish objectives do not know Vishnu. They pursue external objectives and their wishes are impossible to satisfy. They are like the blind being led by the blind, firmly bound by the lord's strong ropes. As long as the pursuit of undesirable objectives does not disappear, they cannot touch Urukrama's lotus feet. As long as they do not crave nothing, they cannot consecrate themselves

with the dust from the great one's feet.' His son said this and stopped. Blind with rage, Hiranyakashipu threw him down from his lap on to the ground.

'"He was filled with great anger and his eyes turned coppery red. He said, 'O *nairitta*s! [698] He deserves to be killed. Quickly take him away and kill him. He is the killer of my brother. This wretched one has abandoned his well-wishers. Like a servant, he is worshipping the feet of Vishnu, his paternal uncle's slayer. Indeed, since he cannot be trusted, what good will he do to Vishnu? He is only five years old and has now given up the affection for his parents, which is so very difficult to cast aside. Even if it is someone else's child, a beneficial one is like a medicinal herb. However, even if he is born from one's own body, a son who causes harm is like a disease. If a limb is injurious to one's own self, it should be lopped off. Through casting it aside, what remains will live happily. He bears the signs of a well-wisher, but is an enemy, just as wicked senses are to a sage. Whether he is eating, lying down or is seated, he must be killed through whatever means can be used.' Instructed by their master, the nairittas wielded tridents in their hands. Their teeth were sharp and their faces were fierce. Their beards and hair were coppery red. They roared, uttering terrible yells. They shouted, 'Cut him. Pierce him.' Prahlada was seated. They struck him in all his inner organs with their tridents. The illustrious one is in all atmans and his atman was immersed in the supreme brahman who cannot be fathomed. Therefore, like the virtuous rites of a person who possesses no good merits, these attempts were unsuccessful. When this effort was repulsed, the Indra among daityas became alarmed. O Yudhishthira! He persistently devised other methods to kill him. Elephants that guarded the directions, poisonous snakes, magical rites, causing him to be hurled down, maya, imprisonment, administering poison through food, lack of food, cold, wind, fire, water, crushing him with boulders—but the asura was incapable of killing his son. He thought for a very long time, but could not think of any other means. 'I have addressed him in many abusive words. I have devised many methods of killing him. I have caused harm through techniques that are not in conformity with dharma. However, using his own energy, he has freed himself. He is not far away from me now. Though he is only a child, his mind has

not suffered from any fear. Like the lord Shunahshepa, he will not forget my ignoble conduct. [699] His sentiments are immeasurable. Like an immortal, he is not scared of anyone. Therefore, by opposing him, I may ensure my death. Or perhaps not.' With his radiance somewhat faded and with his face cast downwards, he thought in this way.

'"Shanda and Amarka, the sons of Ushanas, spoke to him in private. 'Through the furrowing of your eyebrows, you have conquered the three worlds and all the lords. O protector! We do not see any reason for you to be scared or thoughtful. The behaviour of children is neither good, nor bad. Bind him down with Varuna's noose. Capture him, so that he cannot run away when he is scared. A man's intelligence improves with age and the serving of noble ones. Let our preceptor, Bhargava, [700] return.' He agreed to what his preceptor's sons said and instructed, 'Let him be instructed about the dharma that householder kings should follow.' O king! Prahlada was humble and submissive and was progressively taught everything about dharma, artha and kama. The teachers instructed him about these three objectives of existence. However, these instructions described the delight from opposite pairs of sentiments and he did not take these to be desirable. When the teachers were engaged in their household duties, his friends, the other children, found an opportunity and summoned him. [701] However, the immensely intelligent and learned one replied to their sweet words, smiling compassionately, since he knew they were devoted to him. All of them respected his words and cast aside the objects they used to play. They were children and their intelligence was not sullied. They did not find pleasure in injurious instructions about the opposite pair of sentiments. The asura, a great devotee of the illustrious one, addressed them in compassionate words of friendship."'

Chapter 7(6)

'"Prahlada said, 'In this world, from childhood, one must follow the dharma of being devoted to the illustrious one. Birth as a human is extreme-

ly difficult to obtain. Though it is transient, it is capable of achieving the objective. A person must approach the feet of Vishnu. He is the beloved atman in all creatures. He is the lord and the well-wisher. O daityas! Because of association with the body, all embodied beings everywhere experience happiness and unhappiness that comes through the senses. That happens because of destiny and requires no effort. Therefore, one should not make efforts that amount to nothing more than a wastage of the lifespan. The benefit that comes from Mukunda's lotus feet cannot be obtained through such means. Therefore, having come into this life, an accomplished person must strive for that benefit, as long as the human body is strong and is not incapacitated. A man has a lifespan of one hundred years. However, if a person has not controlled himself, half of that is wasted. He sleeps during the night and is submerged in blinding darkness. Confused, twenty years are spent in playing during childhood and youth. When the body is no longer capable, twenty years pass when old age grasps the body. If a person is confounded, desire is strong and is impossible to satisfy. For a distracted person who is attached to the householder mode, the remaining years are wasted in this way. If a man is attached to the householder stage, how can he conquer his senses? The bonds of affection are extremely firm. Bound in this way, who is able to free himself? How can one cast aside thirst, more desired than one's own life? It [702] is so desired that thieves, servants and merchants try to purchase it with their own lives. The association with a beloved wife is pleasant. Her dalliance and counsel are agreeable. A person is bound to her and to his children by bonds of affection. The mind is attached to their faltering tones. In his heart, he remembers his sons and daughters, his brothers, his sisters and his helpless parents. The house is full of agreeable objects. There is the vocation of the family. There are large numbers of animals and servants. Like a silkworm, he is sheathed in acts of avarice and the increasing desires are not satisfied. He pays a great deal of attention to the genital organs and the tongue. [703] This is a great illusion. How can one give it up easily? Seeking to sustain his family, he does not understand that his own lifespan is passing away. He is distracted and counters the objective. Everywhere, he suffers from the three kinds of hardship. [704] Without under-

standing, he thinks that joy comes from maintaining the family. His mind is always interested in accumulating wealth. Though he knows the punishments, in this world and in the next world, of stealing the riches of others, he does that, because he cannot conquer his senses, because his desires are unmet and because of the family. O sons of Danu! Despite being learned, a person seeks to sustain his family and does not know himself, [705] nor is he capable of knowing it. His sentiments are based on differences of "mine" and "belonging to others" and like a confused person, faces darkness. Whoever he is and wherever he is, he is miserable and incapable of knowing his atman. He can never free himself from the lascivious glances of women who treat him like a plaything. He has created his own bonds. O daityas! Therefore, give up the association with daityas who are addicted to material objects, and keep them far away. Approach Narayana, the original god. He is the path to liberation and his association is sought by those who seek liberation. O sons of asuras! Achyuta is in the atmans of all creatures and he is everywhere in this world. One can succeed in pleasing him without great efforts. The illustrious and undecaying lord exists in all mobile and immobile objects and inferior and superior creatures, ending with Brahma. He is in the gunas, the equilibrium of the gunas and the transformation of the gunas. He is the single and supreme atman. His form is inside the atman and everything that can be seen is also him. He is described as pervasive and pervades everything. But he cannot be described. Nor is he differentiated. The own form of the supreme lord is only a feeling of bliss. However, he hides his powers behind maya, leading to the creation of gunas. Therefore, show compassion and fraternal feelings towards all beings. Free yourselves from the sentiments of asuras. Adhokshaja will be satisfied through this. When the infinite and original one is satisfied, what cannot be obtained? In this world, anything that is the result of the three gunas will automatically be obtained. When we are beyond the gunas, why should we aspire for dharma and the others? [706] We will chant about the delight of his feet and taste its essence. Dharma, artha and kama, said to be the three objectives of existence, the self-realization described in the three Vedas, good policy, self-control, many kinds of conduct and the sacred texts—I think that all of

them are true, but only as a means of offering oneself to the supreme being, who is one's well-wisher. This pure knowledge is difficult to comprehend and Narayana, Nara's friend, taught it to Narada. If an embodied being single-mindedly desires nothing other than the illustrious one and bathes in the dust of his lotus feet, he may obtain it. This is the pure dharma of devotion towards the illustrious one and I have earlier heard about this jnana and vijnana from Narada, who sees the divinity.'

'"The sons of the daityas said, 'O Prahlada! You and we do not know any preceptor other than these two sons of the preceptor. Since childhood, they have been our masters. For a child in the inner quarters, association with great people is extremely difficult. O amiable one! Dispel our doubt. Give us a reason to trust you.'"'

Chapter 7(7)

'Narada continued, "Thus, the sons of the daityas asked the asura who was a great devotee of the illustrious one. Remembering what I had told him, he seemed to smile and replied.

'"Prahlada replied, 'Our father left for Mount Mandara to perform austerities. At that time, the gods made a great effort to fight against the danavas. Vasava and the others said, "It is good fortune that the wicked one, [707] the scorcher of the worlds, has been devoured by his own sins, like a snake eaten by ants." The leaders of the asuras heard about their extremely great strength and efforts. Scared of being slaughtered by the gods, they fled in all the directions. All of them hastened to save their own lives and did not glance towards their wives, sons, riches, relatives, homes, animals and belongings. Desiring victory, the immortals plundered the king's abode. Indra captured the king's queen, my mother. While she was being taken away, scared and anxious, she wept like a female osprey. Wandering around as he willed, the devarshi saw her along the path and said, "O lord of the gods! She is innocent. You should not take her away. Free her. O immensely fortunate one! Set her free. She is faithful and is married to someone else."

Indra replied, "In her womb, there is the intolerable seed of someone who hates the gods. Let her remain with me until she has delivered. After that, after having attained my objective, [708] I will free her." Narada said, "He is without sin and is a great devotee of the illustrious one. He is Ananta's powerful follower and you will not be able to achieve what you want." Thus addressed, Indra honoured the devarshi's words and released her. Devotedly circumambulating Ananta's beloved, he went to heaven. The rishi took my mother to his own hermitage. He comforted her and said, "O child! Until your husband returns, be comfortable here." She agreed to this and in the devarshi's presence, lost all fear, as long as the lord of the daityas did not return from his terrible austerities. With supreme devotion, the virtuous one tended to the rishi. She desired the safe delivery of the one who was inside her womb. Out of compassion towards her, the powerful rishi instructed both her and me about pure and true knowledge and dharma. Because she is a woman, after a long period of time, the teachings of the rishi vanished from my mother's mind. However, because of his favours, that memory has not left me even now. If you have trust in my words and possess devotion, your intelligence will also become accomplished, just as it does for women and children like me. Since birth, six kinds of transformations [709] are seen in the body, but not in the atman. Because the lord assumes the form of time, they are also seen in fruits on trees. The atman is eternal and without decay. It is pure and one. It is the witness and is the refuge. It is without transformation and self-illuminating. It is the cause behind all causes and pervasive. It is not touched or covered by any contamination. The learned know these twelve supreme signs of the atman. [710] They abandon confused sentiments of "I" and "mine", associated with the body. A goldsmith extracts gold out of an ore. A person accomplished in yoga does that with the body. From the body that is the field, a person who knows about adhyatma, uses yoga to himself realize the brahman. There are said to be eight *prakriti*s, three gunas and sixteen transformations. [711] However, the preceptors know that a single entity brings them together. The body is the combination of all these and everything is of two types, mobile and immobile. This is where the being must be sought out, discarding on the basis of,

"This is not it", "This is not it". With a pure mind, direct and indirect discrimination must be used, analysing aspects of creation, preservation and destruction. Those who are patient examine it in this way. There are the states of wakefulness, dreaming, deep sleep and intelligence. [712] The one who perceives these is the supreme entity, the one with oversight. One can deduce the nature of the wind from the fragrance it bears. Like that intelligence must be used to differentiate and the three gunas and the outcomes of activities. Rejecting these, the nature of the atman can be deduced. Samsara is the gate for bondage through gunas and activities. Its foundation is ignorance and therefore it is not real. It is like a dream presented to a man. Therefore, your task is to use your intelligence and burn down the seed, the three gunas, and the activities they engender. When these cease, the supreme can be reached. There are thousands of ways. However, the swiftest is love towards the lord and illustrious one, instructed by the honoured one. [713] Serving the preceptor, devotion, offering everything obtained to him, [714] association with virtuous devotees, worshipping the lord, faithfully hearing his accounts, chanting about his qualities and his deeds, meditating on his lotus feet and worshipping his forms—these are the methods. The illustrious lord and Hari is in all creatures. With this thought in mind, one should respect the wishes of all creatures as virtuous. When one acts with such devotion towards the lord, the six categories are vanquished. [715] Through love, one obtains the illustrious Vasudeva. When he [716] hears about his unmatched deeds and qualities, valour and deeds and pastimes in different bodies, his body hair stands up and tears of joy choke his throat. He chants loudly, cries and dances. It is as if he has been possessed by an evil spirit. He weeps, meditates and worships people. [717] Without shame, his intelligence is in the atman and he sighs and exclaims, "O Hari! O lord of the universe! O Narayana!" Such a person is then freed from all kinds of bondage. His mind and body are completely in tune with his [718] sentiments. Through the great mode of devotion, all the seeds of desire are burnt down and one attains Adhokshaja. In this world, the embodied being's mind is always associated with inauspicious objects. However, Adhokshaja destroys the wheel of samsara. The learned know this as the bliss of *nirvana* in the

brahman. Therefore, in your hearts, worship the lord who is in all hearts. O sons of asuras! What is difficult about this effort? Hari's seat and form are inside you, in the core space of your hearts. He is a friend to embodied beings and bestows unlimited benedictions. Why should one bother about objects of pleasure that can generally be obtained? Wealth, wives, animals, sons, homes, land, elephants, treasure and all the other objects that lead to artha and kama are temporary, as is the lifespan itself. What kind of pleasure can these bring to mortals? In this way, the worlds that are obtained through rites may bring greater pleasure. But since they are destroyed, this is also not pure. No taints have been seen, or heard about, in the supreme one. The lord has been spoken about with devotion. Therefore, be devoted to him and obtain him. In this world, taking himself to be learned, for objectives, a man repeatedly undertakes many kinds of acts. However, these acts fail to yield the desired fruits and lead to opposite effects. These acts are driven by the motivation of obtaining happiness and freedom from unhappiness. However, they always lead to unhappiness, cloaked under the cover of happiness. In this world, a man pursues the objective of satisfying desire and wishes for desirable objects. But this body is temporary and is enjoyed by others. [719] The entity [720] goes away and embraces another. There is no need to mention offspring, wives, abodes, riches, kingdoms, treasuries, elephants, advisers, servants, relatives and so on. Though regarded as "mine", these are only indirectly connected. What will the atman do with these trifles? They are destroyed with the body. Appearing in the garb of the desirable, they are undesirable in the path of obtaining the ocean of nectar in the form of eternal bliss. O asuras! Determine how much of self-benefit an embodied being can obtain in this world through sexual gratification and other means. Because of his past deeds, he suffers hardships in this unfortunate state. The body follows his will and an embodied being undertakes acts. However, deeds undertaken by the body and the embodied being—both are consequences of the lack of discrimination. Those who worship the lord Hari without any motives obtain dharma, artha, kama and everything else that is desired. The beloved lord Hari is in all creatures. Through Mahat and the elements, he has himself created everything that is described as living.

Like us, by worshipping Mukunda's feet, anyone can obtain benedictions—a god, an asura, a human, a yaksha or a gandharva. O sons of asuras! Being a brahmana, a god or a rishi isn't sufficient to please Mukunda. Nor are good conduct, great learning, donations, austerities, rites, purity and vows. Hari is pleased through unadulterated devotion alone. Everything else is irrelevant. O danavas! Therefore, act with devotion towards the illustrious Hari. Since the lord is in all creatures, regard everyone else as your own atman. Thus, even daityas, yakshas, rakshasas, women, shudras, residents of Vraja, [721] birds, animals and those with wicked lives have obtained Achyuta. In this world, this is said to be supreme well-being for a person—single-minded devotion towards Govinda and seeing him everywhere.'"'

Chapter 7(8)

'Narada said, "All the sons of the daityas heard what he had described and because it was without any faults, accepted it, not what the preceptors had instructed. The preceptor's son [722] noticed that their minds were made up. Scared, he quickly went and reported this accurately to the king. His [723] entire body trembled because of his rage and he made up his mind to kill his son. Though Prahlada did not deserve it, he abused him in harsh words. He glanced at him with his crooked and wicked eyes, though the controlled one stood before him, humble and gentle, his hands joined in salutation. Since his nature was extremely terrible, he was like a snake that had been struck with the foot. 'O insolent one! O evil-minded one! O wretch! O one who creates dissension in the lineage! You have obstinately deviated from my commands. You are evil in conduct. Today, I will convey you to Yama's abode. The three worlds and their lords tremble because of my rage. O foolish one! On the basis of whose strength, did you forsake my command?' Prahlada replied, 'O king! He is not my strength alone. He is your strength and that of everyone else. He brings the superior and the inferior, mobile and immobile, Brahma and the others under his subjugation. He is Urukrama. He is the lord who is time. He is the strength of the mind. He is sattva.

He is physical strength. He is behind the senses. Through his own strength, he is the supreme one who creates, preserves and destroys the universe. He is the lord of the three gunas. Give up the asura nature that is in you. Make your mind serene. There are no enemies other than being based on a perverse path, leading to an inability to conquer the mind. This is the best way to worship Ananta. Earlier too, there were those who thought they had single-handedly conquered the ten directions. They were governed by delusions about their own powers. However, they were plundered and vanquished by the six bandits. [724] The learned conquer their atmans and are impartial towards all embodied beings. Who is an enemy for such a virtuous person?' Hiranyakashipu said, 'Since you are boasting excessively, it is evident that you wish to die. O evil-minded one! Indeed, the words of those who are about to die are garbled. O unfortunate one! Other than me, you have spoken about a lord of the universe. If he is everywhere, why can he not be seen in this pillar? Since you have boasted, I will sever your head from your body. Let me see if Hari, whose refuge you desire, can protect you today.' The great asura was full of rage and repeatedly abused his son, the great devotee of the illustrious one, through such harsh words. Seizing his sword, he leapt down from his excellent seat. With his fist, he struck the pillar with great force.

'"O dear one! At that time, an extremely terrible sound was heard. It was as if the shell of the cosmic egg had cracked. Aja and the others, in their own respective abodes, heard this sound and thought that their own abodes were being destroyed. He was displaying his valour and energy, desiring to kill his son. He heard that loud and extraordinary sound, the likes of which had never been heard earlier. Everyone in the assembly, the leaders of the enemies of the gods, were terrified and glanced towards the source of that sound. He wished to make the words spoken by his servant come true and also demonstrate that he pervaded all creatures and everything. From the pillar in the assembly hall, he showed himself in a wonderful form that was not animal, nor human. He [725] looked around everywhere and saw the being that had emerged from the middle of the pillar. He exclaimed, 'This is not animal, nor human. What is this form, both man and lion?' While he was

debating in this way, the terrible and extraordinary Nrisimha form manifested itself before him. His fierce eyes were like molten gold. The expanded mouth had a dazzling mane. The tusks were terrible. The tip of the tongue was as sharp as a razor, resembling a flashing sword. The dreadful face was marked by furrowed eyebrows. The motionless ears were erect. The extraordinary mouth gaped, like a cavern in a mountain. The nose and the parted jaws were terrible. The body touched the sky. The neck was short and stout. The chest was broad and the waist was thin. He was covered with body hair that was as fair as the beams of the moon. In every direction, there were hundreds of arms, with nails as weapons. He was impossible to assail and he drove away all the daityas and danavas, vanquishing them with the best of weapons. 'Perhaps Hari, who is great in his maya, has devised this means to kill me. But how can such efforts amount to anything?' Saying this, the elephant among daityas seized a club as a weapon. Roaring, he advanced towards Nrisimha. But just as an insect that falls into the fire is no longer discernible, the asura vanished in Nrisimha's energy. Indeed, for the abode of sattva, this is not surprising. In earlier times, with his own energy, he drank up the tamas. The great asura was angry and struck Nrisimha with the great force of his club. Just as Tarkshya's son [726] seizes a serpent, Gadadhara [727] seized the one who was valiantly advancing with a club. At that time, the asura slipped out of his hands and he toyed with him, the way Garuda plays with a serpent. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! All the lords and immortals, whose abodes had been taken away [728] and who had hidden themselves behind the clouds, thought that this was a bad sign. When he freed himself, the great asura thought that Nrihari [729] was scared of his valour. In the encounter, he lost all his exhaustion. He seized a sword and a shield and again attacked with great force. His speed was like that of a hawk and he executed motions with his shield, marked with one hundred moons. However, Hari, great in speed, laughed out aloud, in a harsh voice, and seized the one whose eyes were half-closed. [730] Afflicted, he thrashed around in all directions, but Hari seized him, though the vajra had been unable to pierce his skin. It was like a snake seizing a mouse. Near the door, he placed him on his thigh and using his nails, played with him, just as

Garuda toys with an extremely venomous snake. Because of his rage, he was impossible to look at. His eyes were terrible. He licked the ends of his mouth with his tongue. Because of the drops of blood, his face and mane were red. He resembled a lion, garlanded with entrails of an elephant it has killed. He tore out his heart, which was like a lotus, with his pointed nails. Then, casting him aside, he turned towards the followers, who were wielding weapons. But he killed all of them, using the nails on his hands as weapons. He was terrible and thousands of such followers were brought down. The hair on his head agitated and dispelled the clouds. The dazzle of his eyes robbed the planets of their radiance. Agitated by his breathing, the waters of the ocean turned turbulent. Terrified at his roars, the elephants in charge of the directions shrieked. The firmament was full of vimanas and were tossed up by his hair. Suffering from the tread of his feet, the earth moved from its position. Because of his energy, mountains were uprooted and the sky and the directions lost their radiance. Resplendent in his energy, the lord then seated himself on the king's excellent seat in that assembly hall. Because of his rage, no one who could challenge him to a duel was seen. His visage was so terrible that no one dared to worship him either.

'"The wives of the gods heard that the anxiety of the three worlds had been removed and that Hari had slain the daitya in an encounter. As a result of their great delight, their faces bloomed. They repeatedly showered down flowers. The firmament was covered with a large array of vimanas, crowded because the gods came to see him. The celestial drums and tambourines were sounded. The foremost among the gandharvas sang and the women danced. O son! The gods, Brahma, Indra, Girisha and the others, the rishis, the ancestors, the Siddhas, the vidyadharas, the giant serpents, the Manus, the Prajapatis, the gandharvas, the apsaras, the charanas, the yakshas, the kimpurushas, the *vetala*s, the kinnaras and all Vishnu's attendants, Sunanda, Kumuda and the others, arrived there. Fierce in his energy, the man-lion was seated there. They joined their hands in salutation and bowed down. From a distance, they separately worshipped him. Brahma said, 'I bow down to Ananta, whose powers are infinite. His valour is wonderful and his deeds are auspicious. Through the gunas, it is he who controls the creation,

preservation and destruction of the universe. His atman never decays and through his pastimes, he ensures all this.' Rudra said, 'The end of the yuga is the time for you to display your rage. This insignificant asura has been killed. You are affectionate towards your devotees. Protect his son. He is standing here and is devoted to you.' Indra said, 'O supreme one! You have saved us and our own shares, attacked by the daitya. The lotuses in our hearts were seized by him and have been illuminated now. O lord! Compared to serving you, what does all this amount to? All of it is devoured by time. O Narasimha! Such devotees pay scant respect to liberation, not to speak of other things.' The rishis said, 'You are the supreme. Through your energy, you taught us about austerities. O original being! Everything was latent in you and you created it. Those [731] were stolen by this one. O one who protects those who seek refuge! Assuming this form, you have protected us and we have again regained our status.' The ancestors said, 'He forcibly appropriated what was offered by our descendants at *shraddha* ceremonies. He drank the water, mixed with sesamum, that was offered to us at the time of visiting tirthas. You have now torn apart his stomach with your nails and we have got those back. We bow down to Nrihari, who protects all dharma.' The Siddhas said, 'We obtained destinations through the practice of yoga. But through his yoga, austerities and strength, the wicked one robbed us of those. He was insolent because of the many things he had done. But you have torn him apart with your nails. O Nrisimha! We prostrate ourselves before you.' The vidyadharas said, 'Through different kinds of practice, we acquired many different kinds of *vidya*. [732] Insolent because of his strength and valour, this foolish one prohibited us from using those. O Nrisimha! Using your maya, in an encounter, you have killed him like an animal. We always prostrate ourselves before you.' The nagas said, 'This wicked one robbed us of our jewels and the jewels among women. You have brought them delight by tearing apart his chest. We bow down before you.' The Manus said, 'We Manus obey your commands. O god! But this son of Diti violated all the ordinances. O lord! But you have killed the deceitful one. We are your servants. Tell us what we should do now.' The Prajpatis said, 'O supreme lord! We Prajapatis have been created by you. How-

ever, he prohibited us from creating subjects. But he is now lying down, his chest splintered by you. O one who brings benefit to the universe! In this avatara, you are the embodiment of sattva.' The gandharvas said, 'O lord! We are actors, singers and dancers. However, because of his valour, energy and strength, he subjugated us. You have now reduced him to this state. How can someone who deviates from the path think of well-being?' The charanas said, 'O Hari! Your lotus feet are the only refuge for those who do not want contamination. That is what virtuous ones desire and you have brought an end to the asura.' The yakshas said, 'By performing acts that brought you pleasure, we became the foremost among your attendants. However, this son of Diti forced us to bear his palanquin. You knew about the torment he caused to people. O Narahari! O twenty-fifth! You have reduced him to *panchatva*.' [733] The kimpurushas said, 'We are only kimpurushas and you are the lord and great being. This wicked person was shamed by all virtuous people. He has now been destroyed.' The *vaitalika*s [734] said, 'In assembly halls and sacrifices, we sang about your unblemished glory and received great respect. However, this wicked person brought us under his subjugation. He was like a disease. O illustrious one! It is good fortune that he has been killed by you.' The kinnaras said, 'O lord! We, the large number of kinnaras, are your followers. However, without any remuneration, Diti's son forced us to serve him. O Hari! You have caused that wicked person to be destroyed. O Narasimha! For the sake of our benefit, please be our protector.' Vishnu's companions said, 'Today, you have assumed this wonderful half-man–half-lion form. O one who grants refuge! O one who brings benefit to all the worlds! It is our good fortune that we have seen it. O lord! He followed your commands, but was cursed by the brahmanas. We understand that you have shown him a favour by killing him.'"'

Chapter 7(9)

'Narada said, "Since he was still full of rage and intolerance, all the gods and others, with Brahma and Rudra at the forefront, found it extremely dif-

ficult to approach him. The gods sent Shri herself. However, on seeing this great and extraordinary form, never seen before or heard of, she was scared and could not approach. Brahma, who was stationed nearby, then sent Prahlada. 'O son! The lord is extremely enraged with your father. Go and pacify him.' O king! The child, the great devotee of the illustrious one, approached slowly. With his hands joined in salutation, he approached and prostrated his body down on the ground. The god saw that the child had fallen down at his feet and was overcome by compassion. He placed his lotus hand on his head and raised him. He destroys fear in the minds of those who are terrified by the serpent known as time. From the touch of his hand, everything inauspicious was cleansed. The vision of the paramatman instantly manifested itself. In the core of his heart, he meditated on the lotus feet. His body was filled with delight and his heart melted. There were tears in his eyes. Single-minded and extremely controlled, he started to pray to Hari. His voice faltered because of the bliss and love, and his heart and eyes were fixed on him.

'"Prahlada said, 'O Hari! I have been born in a fierce lineage. Brahma and the other large number of gods, the sages, the Siddhas and those who have not deviated from the flow of sattva in any of their words are completely qualified. But even they have not been able to worship you till now. How am I worthy of satisfying you? I think that the worship of the supreme being is not possible through noble birth, beauty, austerities, learning, keen senses, energy, power, physical strength, manliness, intelligence and yoga. Like the leader of the herd of elephants, [735] the illustrious one can be satisfied through devotion. In terms of approaching the one who has a lotus in his navel, I think that a *svapacha* [736] is superior to a brahmana who possesses the twelve qualities, [737] but retreats from his lotus feet. If he surrenders himself with his mind and words, he brings benefit and purifies his own life and his own lineage, unlike a person who is only respected a lot. The lord does not expect any gain for himself. He is complete in his own self and does not want respect from people. It is out of compassion that he accepts these from the ignorant. Whatever respect a person offers to the illustrious one is indeed offered back to him, like the reflection of a face in a mirror.

Therefore, though I am incapable, I surrender myself with all my soul to the lord. To the best of my intelligence, I will chant about him. I am of inferior birth and ignorant. I have entered this world, which is the creation of gunas. Such a person can be purified through this chanting. All these, Brahma and the others, follow your commands. You are the reservoir of sattva, unlike us. O lord! We are scared of you. O illustrious one! It is said that for the welfare of creatures, and not for your own happiness and pastime, you assume beautiful avataras. Therefore, let go of your rage now. The asura has been killed. Virtuous ones are rejoicing, as if a scorpion or a snake has been killed. All these worlds are delighted and are waiting. O Nrisimha! People will remember this form, assumed for granting them freedom from fear. O unvanquished one! I am not terrified of your terrible visage and tongue, eyes that are like the sun, furrowed eyebrows, strong and ferocious teeth, the garland of entrails, the blood on the mane, ears like cones, the roaring that frightens elephants who are guardians of the directions and the pointed nails that have torn apart the enemy. O compassionate and affectionate one! I am terrified of the carnage in the wheel of samsara, which is fierce and intolerable. I am being devoured and hurled down, bound by my own karma. O supremely powerful one! When will you be pleased and summon me to your lotus feet, the refuge from everything material? I am roaming around on earth in the midst of the pleasant, the unpleasant, separation, association and births as all the different species. I am being burnt in the fire of grief. By accepting the body as real, every medication for misery brings greater misery. Tell me how I can deserve to be your servant. You are my beloved well-wisher. You are the supreme divinity. O Nrisimha! Virinchi has sung the account of your pastimes. If I am completely absorbed in your feet and associate with hamsas, I will easily pass over all miseries. Chanting about you, I will be freed from the gunas. O Nrisimha! In this world, parents are not the refuge for children, nor medicine for those who are suffering from disease. A boat does not help one who is drowning in the ocean. O lord! For all embodied beings in this world, anything regarded as an easy antidote for torments is not favoured by you. [738] Here or anywhere, everything, at every time, whatever be the relationship, whatever be the cause, wherever it goes

to, wherever it has come from, inferior or superior, whatever its existence, whether it changes or does not change, whether it has a separate nature—everything is invoked by you. They emanate from your own form. In the mind, maya creates a powerful urge to undertake action. [739] The supreme being urges time and allows the gunas to act. The wheel of time has sixteen spokes [740] and the ignorant become full of desire. O one without a beginning! Without you, how can one transgress this? With your atman, you have always vanquished the gunas. Through your powers, you have kept time under subjugation. You are the power behind cause and effect. O lord! Using your powers, you have created this wheel with the sixteen spokes and we are being crushed under it. O lord! We have sought refuge with you. Accept us. O lord! I have seen all the lords who are there in heaven. All these people desire lifespans, prosperity and powers. However, our father laughed in rage and furrowed his eyebrows and all of them were brought down and swept aside. But you have restrained him too. Therefore, I know about the benedictions that those with bodies can receive, from Virinchi downwards—lifespan, prosperity, power and gratification of the senses. Those who are great in their valour are also destroyed and taken away by time. I do not desire this. Make me a servant by your side. Where are those benedictions? They are pleasant to hear about, but are in the form of mirages. This body gives rise to many kinds of diseases. However, even learned people are not satiated. They seek to pacify the fire of desire with small drops of honey, but this is extremely difficult to do. O lord! Rajas is strong in me and the power of tamas is stronger still. I have been born in a lineage that is inferior to that of the gods. Look at your compassion towards me. You showed me your favours and placed your lotus hand on my head, not on that of Brahma, Bhava or Rama. [741] Indeed, there is no sense of superior and inferior in you. You are a well-wisher towards all creatures and towards the universe. Depending on the kind of service rendered, you show your favours to all those who serve you, even if they are inferior to the gods. There is no sense of superior and inferior in you. People descend into this material existence, which is like a pit full of snakes. Because of association, I was also likely to follow this path of desire. However, the illustrious and divine rishi accepted

me. Therefore, how can I give up the idea of serving as your servant? O Ananta! When my father tried to kill me, you saved my life. I think this was because I am your own servant and because you didn't want the rishi's words to be rendered false. [742] Wishing to cause me injury, he seized a sword and said, "If there is a lord who is superior to me, tell him to save you. I will sever your head." This universe is the manifestation of you alone. You existed before its beginning and you will exist after its end. You separately exist in its middle. You have created the transformation of gunas through your own maya. You enter them and cause many types of manifestations. You are this. You are the lord of cause and effect. However, you are also distinct from it. This feeling of "mine" and "someone else's" is futile and arises because of maya. Something that depends for its birth, preservation, destruction and manifestation on something else is no different from it, just as a tree is no different from the seed and the earth is no different from its subtle element. [743] At the time of destruction, you withdraw this universe into your own self and lie down on the waters. You experience your own bliss and are without any activity. Your eyes are closed in yoga and you appear to be asleep. But you are in a state of turiya. There is no tamas in you and you do not experience the gunas. Everything is your form. This [744] is your body. Through your own powers, you urge time and the nature of Prakriti. You lay down in the waters on the body of Ananta. [745] When your meditation came to an end, a giant lotus manifested itself from your navel, like a banyan tree from a tiny seed. It had been dormant within you. From that, the best of wise ones [746] was generated. He could see nothing other than you and thought that you, his seed, was outside him. He immersed himself in the waters for one hundred years to find the origin of the lotus, but could not find it. O lord! How can a sprout perceive the seed? Seated on the lotus, the one who was his own source was extremely surprised. After some time, he performed terrible austerities and purified himself. O lord! He saw your subtle atman pervading his own self, the senses, full of desires, and the elements, just as smell pervades the earth. Virinchi saw the great being, endowed with thousands of faces, feet, heads, hands, thighs, noses, mouths and eyes and adorned with ornaments and weapons. Full of maya,

your appearance was an aggregate of different things and he was delighted. You assumed the form of Hayashira and killed the two extremely strong ones known as Madhu and Kaitabha. They were against the Vedas and full of rajas and tamas. You gave all the sacred texts to him. Your beloved form is full of sattva. In this way, you assume different avataras—as men, inferior species, rishis, gods and aquatic creatures. You protect the worlds and kill those who torment the universe. O great being! You protect the dharma that is appropriate for the yuga. You remain hidden during kali yuga. Therefore, you are known as Triyuga. [747] O lord of Vaikuntha! This mind is wicked and is polluted by fierce sins, addicted to desire and afflicted by joy, misery and fear. It is not interested in your account. I am wretched. How can I comprehend your activities? O Achyuta! My tongue is not satisfied and drags me in one direction. My genitals drag me in another direction. My skin, stomach and hearing drag me in other directions. My smell and fickle eyes drag me elsewhere, as do my power to act. They are like many co-wives, nibbling at the lord of the household. Because of my own deeds, I have thus fallen into Vaitarani. [748] One after another, I face births, deaths and sufferings and am greatly terrified. Alas! You can see us, wicked and foolish ones facing "mine", "someone else's", enmity and friendship in bodies. Please save us now. O illustrious one! Who but you can be a preceptor for everyone? Please try to raise us up. You are the cause behind creation, preservation and destruction. Show your compassion towards these foolish ones. You are a friend to the afflicted, not to speak of those like us, who serve those whom you love. O supreme one! I am not anxious about Vaitarani, which is so very difficult to cross. My mind is immersed in the great amrita of chanting about your valour. I grieve about those who pursue their senses, with their minds turning away from you. Those foolish ones are bearing the burden of a happiness that is maya. O god! In general, sages desire their own liberation. They roam around in desolate parts, silent, and not interested in the benefit of others. I do not wish to leave aside miserable ones and be liberated alone. For those who are wandering around, I do not see anyone other than you as a refuge. A householder's happiness, sexual gratification and other things are trifles. This is like scratching an itching

hand with another hand. Misery leads to other miseries. In this world, those miserable ones suffer from many kinds of hardship and are never satisfied. A persevering person tolerates the itching in his mind. O Purusha! Silence, vows, learning, austerities, studying, one's own dharma, explaining the sacred texts, solitude, chanting and meditation—these are generally said to be the superior methods for those who have cast aside their senses. But, in this connection, there are proud ones who only use these as a means of making a living. The Vedas say that your two forms are cause and effect. They are like the seed and the sprout and there is no other form for you. Those who are discriminating and practise yoga can see both these forms in front of them. This is like the fire in the wood and there is nothing else. O lord! You are wind, fire, earth, sky, water, the objects of the senses, breath of life, the senses, the mind, consciousness and ego. All these, with gunas and without gunas, are you. Even if it appears otherwise to the mind and speech, there is nothing other than you. The gunas, the presiding divinities over the gunas, Mahat and the others, the mind and other things, gods and mortals—all these have a beginning and an end. O supreme one! Those who are extremely intelligent understand and cease studying the Vedas. O supreme among those who should be worshipped! Therefore, I bow before you and praise you—performing rites, worship, remembering your deeds, resorting to your feet, hearing about your accounts and serving you. Without these six elements of devotion, how can a person attain the paramahamsa state?'"

'Narada continued, 'Thus, though he is nirguna, the devotee devotedly described his gunas. He was pleased with Prahlada, who was bowing down before him. Controlling his rage, he replied.

'"'The illustrious one said, 'O fortunate one! O Prahlada! O supreme among asuras! I am pleased with you. May you be fortunate. Ask for the boon that you desire. I am the one who satisfies the desires of all men. O one with a long life! Without pleasing me, it is extremely difficult to see me. Having himself seen me, a living being does not deserve to be tormented again. Because of this, persevering and virtuous ones, those who desire their benefit, try to please me in every possible way. O immensely fortunate one! I am the lord of all kinds of benedictions.'"

'Narada continued, "The supreme among asuras was thus tempted with the best allurements in the worlds. But he was single-mindedly devoted to the illustrious one and did not wish for anything."'

Chapter 7(10)

'Narada said, "The child thought that all these were impediments towards bhakti yoga. He smiled and replied to Hrishikesha. Prahlada said, 'Do not tempt me. Because of my birth, I am addicted to desire and those boons. But I am terrified of such attachment. Detached, I seek liberation and have sought refuge with you. O lord! You wish to test the symptoms of servitude in an excellent devotee and have goaded such desire. These are the seeds of samsara and the bonds of the heart. O universal preceptor! You are full of compassion. Otherwise, such a thing would not have occurred. If a person hopes for benedictions, he is a merchant and not a servant. From a master, if a person hopes for benedictions, he is not really a servant. Nor is a master who desires to confer such benedictions on a servant a true master. I am your devotee and without any desires. You are also my master and my refuge. Unlike that between a king and his servant, there is no other motive between the two of us. O supreme among those who grant boons! If you wish to grant me my desired boon, please grant me the boon that no desire should ever sprout in my heart. Otherwise, right from birth, the senses, the mind, the breath of life, the atman, dharma, fortitude, intelligence, modesty, prosperity, energy, memory and truth are destroyed. O Pundarikaksha! If a man is freed from the desire that exists in the mind, it is only then that he is fit to attain the illustrious one. Oum! O illustrious one! I bow down before you. O great-souled being! O Hari! O one with this wonderful lion as your form! O brahman! O paramatman!' The illustrious one replied, 'Those who are single-mindedly devoted to me do not hope for any benedictions from me, in this world or in the next. They are like you. Nevertheless, throughout this manvantara, as the lord of the daityas, you will enjoy objects of pleasure. My accounts will continue to be loved by you. Your atman will be sin-

gle-mindedly immersed in me. I am in all creatures and am the lord who enjoys all sacrifices. Perform sacrifices and practise yoga, abandoning acts for fruits. You will enjoy pleasure and experience sin. But because you are accomplished, you will perform good deeds. Because of the force of time, you will give up your body. Your deeds will be pure and will be chanted about in the world of the gods and will spread everywhere. Freed from bonds, you will obtain me. If a man chants the song you sang for me [749] and remembers you and me, in the course of time, he will be freed from the bondage of action.' Prahlada said, 'O great lord! O lord of all those who grant boons! I desire a boon from you. My father did not know that you were the lord full of energy and abused you. He did not know that you are directly the lord and preceptor of all the worlds. Regarding you as his brother's slayer, he was full of intolerance. Because of his false outlook, he also harmed me, your devotee. His sins are extremely great and impossible to ignore. Even then, let him be purified. O one who is affectionate towards the distressed! He was purified as soon as he glanced towards you.' The illustrious one replied, 'O unblemished one! O purifier of your lineage! O virtuous one! Since you have been born in this lineage, your father, and twenty-one generations of your ancestors have been purified. [750] Wherever my devotees, tranquil, impartial, virtuous and noble in conduct exist, even miserable regions are purified. O Indra among daityas! Those who are devoted to me give up all desire. In every possible way, they do not cause violence to the large number of creatures, the superior or the inferior. In this world, there are people who follow you and become my devotees. But you are indeed the best among all those devotees, one cited as the ideal. O dear one! By touching my limbs, your father has been purified in every possible way. Perform his funeral rites. With an excellent son like you, he will obtain the worlds. As instructed by those who speak about the brahman, occupy your ancestral position. O son! Immerse your mind in me and offer all your acts unto me.' Prahlada did as the illustrious one had asked and performed his father's funeral rites. O king! He was consecrated by the brahmanas.

'"On seeing Hari Narahari, Brahma's face shone. Surrounded by the gods and the others, he praised him in auspicious words and said, 'O god of the

gods! O controller of the universe! O cause behind creatures! O one who existed before me! It is good fortune that you have killed the asura who tormented the worlds. Having obtained boons from me, he could no longer be slain by anything I created. Insolent because of his austerities, yoga and strength, he destroyed all the ordinances. It is good fortune that his son, this virtuous child, is a great devotee of the illustrious one. It is good fortune that you have saved him from death and that he has now attained you. O illustrious one! If a person meditates on this form of yours with supreme concentration, he is protected from terror on all sides, even if Death wishes to kill him.' The illustrious one responded, 'O lord! O one generated from a lotus! Do not bestow such boons on asuras. A boon bestowed on a cruel species is like amrita fed to a snake.' O king! Having said this, the illustrious Hari vanished from the spot. He is invisible to all creatures and was worshipped by Parameshthi. [751] Prahlada bowed his head down and worshipped and honoured Parameshthi, Bhava, the Prajapatis and the gods, all portions of the illustrious one. With Kavya [752] and the other sages, the one who is seated on a lotus [753] made Prahlada the lord of the daityas and the danavas. The gods honoured him and bestowed supreme benedictions on him. O king! When Brahma and the others had been honoured back, they left for their own abodes.

'"In this way, Vishnu's two attendants became Diti's sons. Though Hari was in their hearts, they were slain because they possessed hate towards him. Because of the curse of brahmanas, they again became two rakshasas. These two, Kumbhakarna and Dashagriva, were slain through Rama's valour. They lay down in the field of battle, their hearts mangled by Rama's arrows. As in their earlier lives, they gave up their bodies when he [754] was in their minds. Thus, they were again born in this world as Shishupala and Karusha. [755] They were bound in enmity towards Hari and obtained him in your presence. [756] Because of what they did in their earlier lives, there were other kings who harboured enmity towards Krishna, but they gave this up at the time of their deaths. Like an insect captured by a wasp, they also obtained him. Just as supremely devoted people obtain the illustrious one, in the same way, because they constantly thought about him, Chedi and the

other kings also returned and merged with him. I have told you everything that you asked me, about the enmity of Damaghosha's son and others towards Hari and their merging with him. This is the sacred account of the great-souled Krishna's, who is devoted to brahmanas and gods, descent as an avatara and the original death of the two daityas. [757] It is about the conduct of Prahlada, the great devotee of the illustrious one, about his devotion, knowledge and detachment and Hari's true nature. It is a description of the qualities and deeds of the one who is the lord of creation, preservation and destruction, about the positions of the superior and the inferior and the passage of a long period of time. The *bhagavata* dharma is a means to go to the illustrious one. In this account, there is a complete description of how one can obtain adhyatma. This sacred account describes Vishnu's valour. If one faithfully listens to his deeds, one is freed from the bondage of action. This is about the original being's pastime as a lion and about the slaying of the Indra among daityas, the leader of herds. It is about the daitya's virtuous son, supreme among auspicious ones. If one attentively listens to these accounts, how can there be any fear in the worlds? In the world of men, you are extremely fortunate. Sages who can purify come to this world. They directly reside with you in your households. The supreme brahman is mysterious, but appears with the signs of a man. Great people search for this brahman, desiring kaivalya, nirvana and the experience of bliss. However, he was your friend and well-wisher and your maternal uncle's son. Destiny made the atman who should be worshipped your preceptor. Despite using their intelligence, Bhava, the one from the lotus and others have not been able to describe his form. He is the one who is worshipped through silence, devotion and renunciation. That is the way the lord of the Satvatas is pleased. O king! In ancient times, Maya, infinite in the use of maya, destroyed Rudra's glory and the illustrious one enhanced it again."

'The king asked, "How, and through what act, did Maya destroy the god's, known as Isha to the universe, fame? How did Krishna enhance it? Please tell us."

'Narada replied, "The asuras were defeated in a battle by the gods, whose powers had increased. They went and sought refuge with their supreme pre-

ceptor, Maya, full of maya. The lord constructed three cities that were made out of gold, silver and iron. Their movements were impossible to fathom and they were stocked with equipment impossible to understand. O king! Located inside these, the asura soldiers remembered their former enmity, and undetected by anyone, destroyed the three worlds and their lords. The lords of the worlds went to Ishvara [758] and bowed down before him. 'O god! Save those who are dear to you. We have been destroyed by those who reside in the three cities.' The illustrious lord showed his favours to the gods and told them not to be afraid. He affixed an arrow to his bow and released it in the direction of the three cities. Consequently, arrows that had the complexion of fire issued from the solar circle. Struck by those rays, the cities were no longer visible. Struck by them, all the residents of the city fell down, lifeless. However, the great yogi, Maya, took them and flung them into a well filled with juices. Touched by the juices of amrita, they rose up again, firm as diamonds and extremely energetic. They were like fiery lightning that tears clouds apart. On seeing that his resolution had been shattered, the one with the bull on his banner became dejected. Therefore, the illustrious Vishnu thought about a means that could be used. Vishnu himself assumed the form of a cow and Brahma became the calf. They entered Tripura at the appropriate time and drank up all the amrita juice in the well. Though the asuras saw them, they were confused and did not do anything to restrain them. The great yogi [759] also got to know. But remembering that this was destiny, he did not sorrow. He spoke to the confused guardians of the juice, who were grief-stricken. 'In this world, no one, a god, an asura, a man, or even Ishvara himself, can contravene what destiny has ordained for him or for anyone else.' Then, through his own powers of dharma, knowledge, detachment, opulence, austerities, learning and rites, he [760] created the equipment for Shambhu—chariot, charioteer, standard, mounts, bow, armour and arrows. Equipped on the chariot in this way, he affixed an arrow to his bow. At the time of Abhijit muhurta, [761] Ishvara fixed the arrow to the bow. O king! Thus, Hara burnt down Tripura, which was so very difficult to penetrate. Drums were sounded in the firmament and there were hundreds of vimanas assembled there. The gods, the rishis, the ancestors and the lords

of the Siddhas showered down flowers and exclaimed, 'Victory!' They chanted in delight. Large numbers of apsaras danced. O king! Thus, the illustrious one, the destroyer of cities, burnt down the three cities. Having been praised by Brahma and the others, he returned to his own abode. In this way, using his own maya, Hari himself imitates the actions of the world of men. The rishis sing about the valour of the preceptor of the universe, which purifies the worlds. What shall I speak about next?"'

Chapter 7(11)

Shri-Shuka said, 'This account of the lord of daityas, [762] who had Urukrama in his atman, was praised in assemblies of virtuous people. Having heard it, Yudhishthira, foremost among great ones, was delighted. He again asked Svayambhuva's son. [763] Yudhishthira said, "O illustrious one! I wish to hear about the eternal dharma of men, the conduct of the varnas and the ashramas, whereby men can obtain the supreme. You are the son of Prajapati Parameshthi himself. Because of your austerities, yoga and meditation, you are the most revered of Brahma's sons. Brahmanas who are devoted to Narayana, compassionate, virtuous and tranquil like you, know about the supreme and secret dharma, not others."

'Narada replied, "I bow down before the illustrious Aja. For the worlds, he is the bridge of dharma. I will tell you about the eternal dharma I heard from Narayana's mouth. For the benefit of the worlds, he manifested himself in his portion as the son of Dharma and Daksha's daughter. [764] He studies and performs austerities in the hermitage of Badarika. The illustrious Hari is the foundation of dharma and all the Vedas are in him. O king! So are the smriti texts, whereby, the soul is gratified. O Pandava! (1) Truthfulness; [765] (2) Compassion; (3) Austerities; (4) Purity; (5) Endurance; (6) Discrimination; (7) Control of the mind; (8) Control of the senses; (9) Non-violence; (10) Brahmacharya; (11) Renunciation; (12) Studying; (13) Uprightness; (14) Contentment; (15) Impartiality in service; (16) Gradual withdrawal from the material pleasures of the world; (17) Regard of human en-

deavours as futile; (18) Silence; (19) Inquiry about the atman; (20) As is proper, a fair distribution of food and other objects among creatures; (21) An intelligence that looks upon them, especially humans, as one's own self and divinities; (22) Hearing about the illustrious one; (23) Chanting about him; (24) Remembering great ones; (25) Service; [766] (26) Worship; (27) Bowing down; (28) Accepting a state of servitude; (29) Regarding him as a friend; and (30) Surrendering oneself to him—all these are said to be the supreme dharma for men. O king! Through these thirty signs, the one who is in all atmans is satisfied. Brahma has said that a person is a dvija if the samskaras have been undertaken for him, without interruption. [767] For dvijas who are pure in birth and conduct, sacrifices, studying and donations have been reccommended. They have been urged to observe the tasks for specific ashramas. Studying and the others are the six for brahmanas. [768] Others must not receive. [769] The king protects subjects and earns his living by imposing taxes on those who are not brahmanas. Vaishyas earn their subsistence through agriculture and trade and must always follow brahmanas. Shudras serve dvijas [770] and their sustenance comes from the master's means of subsistence. There are four kinds of means of subsistence for brahmanas and each is superior to the preceding one—various means of subsistence, accepting alms without begging for them, wandering around and begging and picking up leftover grain from fields or markets. Except at times of calamity, a person from an inferior varna must not follow the means of subsistence of a superior varna. With the exception of kings, at times of calamity, everyone can undertake everything. [771] For the sake of preserving life, a person may accept the professions of *rita*, amrita, mrita, *pramrita* or *satyanrita*, but must never follow *sha-vritti*. Rita is when one picks up leftover grain from fields or markets. Amrita is accepting alms without begging for them. Mrita is always begging for alms. Pramrita is said to mean tilling of the field. Satyanrita is trade. Sha-vritti is serving those who are inferior and this is condemned and must always be avoided by brahmanas and kings. The brahmana is an embodiment of all the Vedas. The king is an embodiment of all the gods. Control over the mind, control over the senses, purity, contentment, forgiveness, uprightness, knowledge,

compassion, immersion in Achyuta and truthfulness are the signs of a brahmana. Prowess, valour, fortitude, energy, generosity, control over one's own self, forgiveness, devotion to brahmanas, graciousness and offering protection are the signs of a kshatriya. Devotion to gods, seniors and Achyuta, sustenance of the three objectives of human existence, belief in the sacred texts, constant enterprise and skills are the signs of a vaishya. Submissiveness, purity, honest service of the master, sacrifices without using mantras, lack of thievery, truthfulness and protection of cattle and brahmanas are indicated for shudras. For women who regard the husband as a divinity, there must be eagerness to serve and follow him and his relatives and acceptance of the husband's vows. Sweeping and plastering the house, decorating it, decorating her own self, constant wearing of clean garments, cleaning household equipment, satisfying the great and small wishes of the husband with modesty and self-control and on every occasion, addressing him with loving, agreeable and truthful words—this is how a virtuous wife serves her husband. She is content, without being greedy. She is accomplished and knows about dharma. She speaks agreeable and truthful words. She is not distracted. She is pure and gentle. She thus serves a husband who has not fallen. [772] If a woman serves her husband as Hari and is as devoted as Shri, in Hari's world, with her husband, she rejoices like Shri. The means of subsistence for those of mixed parentage [773] follow those of their respective lineages, as long as they are not thieves or wicked. This is also true of *antyajas*, those who reside at the boundaries. [774] From one yuga to another yuga, the dharma of men is generally determined by nature. O king! Those who have insight about the Vedas have said that this brings benefit in this world and in the next. The present means of subsistence are determined by nature and one's own karma. If one gives up one's own natural karma, one gradually approaches the nirguna stage. If a field is sown repeatedly, it automatically becomes infertile. If it is not appropriate and seeds are sown again, it is destroyed. In that way, the mind is a store of desires. O king! However, excessive pursuit of desire leads to disgust, just as drops of ghee do not satisfy a fire. There are signs that have been described as characteriz-

ing a specific varna. If these are seen in a man who belongs to a different varna, he is designated as being from that varna."' [775]

Chapter 7(12)

'Narada said, "A brahmachari must reside in the preceptor's house. He must be controlled and do what is good for the preceptor. Like an inferior person, he must act like a servant, firm in his affection towards the preceptor. At the time of the morning and the evening sandhyas, he must worship the preceptor, the fire, the sun and the best among the gods. He must be restrained in speech. He must control himself and chant the name of the brahman. [776] When the preceptor summons him, he must control himself and study the Vedas. When this starts and ends, he must bend his head down at his feet. He must wear a girdle and garments made out of deer skin. [777] His hair must be matted and he must carry a staff and a water pot. He must wear the sacred thread. As instructed, there must be a handful of *darbha* grass in his hand. In the morning and the evening, he will go out and beg for alms and offer what has been obtained to the preceptor. He will eat when he has been given permission. Otherwise, he will sometimes fast. He will be good in conduct and restrained in eating. He will be accomplished and faithful and will conquer his senses. He will have dealings with women, and with those who have been enslaved by women, only to the extent that it is necessary. If he is observing the great vow [778] and has not become a householder, he must avoid talking to women. The senses are so powerful that they take away a mendicant's mind. [779] If he himself is young and the preceptor's wife is also young, he must not allow her to tend to his hair, massage him, bathe him or anoint him. Indeed, a woman is like fire and a man is like a pot of clarified butter. In private, one must not associate more than is necessary with one's own daughter, not to speak of others. Until one has realized the atman and until everything becomes the lord's reflection, the notion of duality [780] does not cease and there can thus be a calamity. Everything described applies to a householder and a mendicant. A householder follows the means

of subsistence indicated by the preceptor and has intercourse with his wife during her periods. A person who has taken the great vow [781] must not use collyrium and unguents, must not massage the body, must not look at women or their paintings, must not eat meat, must not drink and must give up garlands, fragrant scents and ornaments. According to his capacity and to the extent possible, a dvija must reside in his preceptor's household to study and understand the three Vedas, the Vedangas and the Upanishads. [782] If his master, the preceptor, so desires, he must grant him what he wishes for. [783] With his permission, he can become a householder or go and reside in the forest. Or he can become a wandering mendicant. Adhokshaja is in the fire, in the preceptor, in one's atman and in all creatures. His abode can be seen in all beings. Though he seems to have entered them, he doesn't actually enter them. In this way, one becomes a brahmachari, a *grihastha*, or resorts to *vanaprastha*, or becomes a mendicant. While wandering around, if one attains vijnana, one goes to the supreme brahman. I will tell you about the rules approved by sages for vanaprastha. By resorting to this, one easily goes to the worlds obtained by rishis and sages. Such a person [784] should not eat anything that is the result of tilling, or something that is not the result of tilling, but has become ripe before time. He should not eat food cooked by the fire. He should only eat what has been ripened and cooked by the sun. He should prepare charu and cakes of forest products that have naturally grown over a period of time. When he obtains new food, he must throw away the old. [785] He will resort to a thatched cottage or a cave in a mountain only for the sake of preserving the fire. However, he will himself tolerate the cold, the snow, the wind, the fire, the rain and sun. He will have matted hair and will let his hair, body hair, nails and beard grow. He will possess a water pot, deerskin, a staff, garments made of bark and a receptacle for the fire. The sage will roam around in the forest for twelve, eight, four or two years, depending on how long the mind is not agitated by the hardships. If he can no longer undertake his rites after this period, because of disease or old age, or because he wishes to pursue knowledge, he should resort to fasting. [786] He will invoke the fire in his atman and give up notions of 'I' and 'mine'. As is appropriate, he will deposit his aggregate into the

causes. [787] The gaps inside the body will be merged into space, the breath of life will be merged into air, the heat of the body will be merged into fire, the fluid in the body (blood, mucus and phlegm) will be merged into water and everything that is left [788] will be merged into the earth. Thus, a person who knows himself will merge everything into the causes. Speech and the organ of speech will be rendered to Agni, the hands and craftsmanship to Indra, the feet and power of locomotion to Vishnu, sexual desire and the genital organs to Prajapati and the rectum and power of excretion to Mrityu. Everything is consigned to the proper place. The organ of hearing and the vibration of sound goes to the directions, and skin and the sense of touch to Vayu. O king! The eyes and form are consigned to the sun god, the tongue and its sense to the Prachetas in the water, [789] and smell and the object of smell to the earth. The mind and wishes are vested in the moon, and intelligence and the object of intelligence in the supreme and wise one. [790] Action, false ego and acts undertaken through notions of 'I' and 'mine' are vested in Rudra. Consciousness and sattva are vested in the kshetrajna and vaikarika ahamkara and the gunas are vested in the supreme one. He then merges the earth in water, water in fire, fire in wind, and wind in space. Space is merged into ego, ego into Mahat, Mahat into Prakriti, [791] and Prakriti into Akshara. [792] With the atman merged into Akshara, only consciousness is left. Having realized non-duality, he stops, [793] like a fire that has destroyed its own source."'

Chapter 7(13)

'Narada said, "A person who is capable [794] will become a mendicant, possessing nothing but his body. He must not spend more than one night in any village. Indifferent, he will roam around the earth. If he is going to wear a garment, a loin cloth is sufficient covering. Unless there is a calamity, he must not bear any signs other that of a staff and other objects. [795] He will wander around alone, begging for alms. He takes delight in his atman and does not depend on anything else. Devoted to Narayana, he will be friendly

towards all beings. He will visualize the atman in the universe and see cause and effect in the supreme and undecaying one. He will see his atman as the supreme brahman, which pervades everything, cause and effect. When he is asleep and when he is awake and in between the two, he will perceive the progress of the atman. He will perceive that both bondage and liberation are the result of maya and are not real. He will not rejoice in inevitable death, or in transient life. He will wait for the ultimate time, which brings about the creation and destruction of beings. He will not be attached to the sacred texts, nor will he use these to make a living for himself. He will abandon all debates and arguments and will not take the side of either party. He will not bind himself to disciples, nor will he study numerous texts. To earn a living, he will not expound these. He will not start on any undertaking. A great-souled one does not generally resort to the state of being a mendicant with the objective of acquiring dharma. He is tranquil and impartial. He may accept or discard. [796] His signs are not evident. But the intentions of such a learned person are evident from the fact that he is like a restless child. Even if he is wise in vision, he must show himself to the world of men as someone who is dumb. In this connection, an ancient history is recounted. This is about a conversation between Prahlada and the sage Ajagara. [797]

'"Surrounded by a few of his advisers, Prahlada, the beloved devotee, was roaming around the worlds, wishing to ascertain the nature of people. On the banks of the Kaveri, on the slopes of Sahya, [798] he saw him lying down on the bare ground. He was covered with dust all over his body and his spotless energy was hidden. Through his deeds, form, words or signs, people were unable to understand his varna or ashrama, who he was and who he was not. The asura, the great devotee of the illustrious one, bowed down and honoured him in the proper way, touching his feet with his head. He wished to know and asked the following question. 'You possess a strong body, like someone who enjoys and can make efforts. Wealth comes to those who make efforts and in this world, objects of pleasure accrue to those who possess wealth. The bodies of those who enjoy become stout, not otherwise. O brahmana! You are lying down, without making any efforts.

Clearly, you do not possess wealth to acquire objects of pleasure. O brahmana! Your body has not experienced objects of pleasure. Pardon me. But how is it that you are stout? You are wise, accomplished and skilled. You are impartial and can speak colourful and agreeable words. You can see people exerting themselves in tasks, but you are simply lying down here.' The lord of the daityas asked the great sage in this way. Attracted by the amrita of his speech, he smiled and replied.

'"The brahmana said, 'O best among asuras! You are revered as a noble person and you already know all this. Through the vision of adhyatma, you know the fruits of acts and their renunciation. Since you are devoted to the illustrious one, the god Narayana is always in your heart. Like the sun dispelling darkness, it is devotion alone that can bring about knowledge. O king! Nevertheless, according to what I have heard, I will tell you the answer to your question. If a person wishes to purify himself, he must speak to a person like you. I was driven by the thirst for material objects and was engaged in trying to satisfy desire. I engaged in tasks and was born as many different kinds of species. Whirled around by wilful karma, I obtained this human form. This is a gate to heaven, liberation, birth as inferior species, or birth as a human again. In this form, couples unite to bring about happiness and avoid misery. I saw them engage in tasks and, acting in a contrary way, have now withdrawn. Happiness is the nature of the atman and is manifested when one withdraws from all material activities. On seeing that objects of pleasure are nothing but mental states one plunges into, I am lying down. A man forgets that his benefit is in his own atman. Because the false and the material are alluring, he obtains this terrible state of samsara. The water is covered in overgrowth. Not realizing this, an ignorant person desires water and rushes after a mirage. Though interested in his own welfare, he searches elsewhere. He searches for his happiness, but his body and other things [799] are controlled by destiny. Under the control of this, he seeks to alleviate suffering. But all his attempts are repeatedly unsuccessful. With a great deal of difficulty, a mortal person may obtain riches to satisfy his desires. But what purpose does this serve? He is never able to free himself from adhyatmika and other kinds of misery. [800] I perceive the miseries of rich people.

They are greedy and have not been able to conquer their atmans. Because of their fear, they cannot sleep. They are suspicious of everything. Those anxious about both life and wealth are always scared of kings, thieves, enemies, their own relatives, animals, birds, those who seek their wealth, time and even of their own selves. The root cause of grief, confusion, fear, anger, attachment, lassitude and exhaustion is the desire for life and wealth. A learned man must give this up. In this world, the bee and the giant serpent are the two best preceptors. They teach us detachment and satisfaction with whatever has been obtained. From the bee, I have learnt not to be attached to all the objects of desire. Wealth is like honey and is acquired with a great deal of hardship. However, someone else slays the owner and takes it away. [801] I do not desire anything and am satisfied with whatever comes to me on its own. Like a large serpent, I resort to my spirit and lie down for many days. Sometimes, I get a little bit of food. Sometimes, I get a lot. Sometimes, it is tasty. Sometimes, it is not tasty. Sometimes, it has a lot of qualities. Sometimes, it has no qualities at all. Sometimes, it is given to me with a great deal of respect. Sometimes, it is given to me with no respect at all. Sometimes I have to eat food just after I have eaten. Depending on availability, I eat during the day or at night. I wear garments made out of linen, silk, deer skin, rags or bark, or whatever else is available. My mind is content with whatever destiny brings me. Sometimes, I lie down on the bare ground. Sometimes, I lie down on grass, leaves, stones or ashes. Sometimes, depending on the wishes of another, I lie down on a couch in a palace, with a pillow. Sometimes, I bathe and anoint my limbs with unguents. I wear excellent garments and adorn myself with garlands. Sometimes, I ride on a chariot, an elephant or a horse. O lord! Sometimes, like a demon, I am attired in nothing but the directions. [802] People vary in their natures and I do not criticize or praise them. I desire their benefit and hope for their union with the great-souled one. This differentiation [803] is the cause of all confusion in the mind and must be offered as an oblation to the consciousness. Like that, the mind must be offered as an oblation into vaikarika ahamkara and that must be offered as an oblation to maya. A sage who can see the truth must offer maya as an oblation to realization of the atman.

Without any material desires, one then ceases all activity and is based on realization of the atman. I have thus described to you my conduct, which is extremely secret. This differs from the sacred texts of the worlds. However, you are devoted to the illustrious one.'" [804]

'Narada continued, "The lord of the asuras heard about this paramahamsa dharma from the sage. Delighted, he worshipped him. Taking his leave, he left for his residence."'

Chapter 7(14)

'Yudhishthira asked, "O devarshi! Tell me about the path that a householder can easily follow. How can a foolish person like me, as a householder, attain the objective?"'

'Narada replied, "O king! A person who is a grihastha must perform the appropriate rites, which are a direct offering to Vasudeva, and serve the great sages. He must always faithfully hear about the accounts, which are like amrita, of the illustrious one's avataras. At the right time, [805] he must surround himself with tranquil people. Through association with virtuous people, he will gradually free himself from attachment to his own self, his wife, his sons and other things. When these are severed, he will wake up, as if from a dream. As long as a learned person is pursuing artha and has the body and the household, as a human in this world of men, he must appear to be attached to these, but is really not attached. Without any sense of ownership, he must agree to whatever his relatives, his parents, his sons, his brothers and other well-wishers say and desire. A learned person acts so that he enjoys all the wealth that Achyuta devises from heaven, from the earth and from the firmament. [806] As long as an embodied being does not die, he can claim ownership on only what is required to fill the stomach. A person who thinks of anything more is a thief and deserves to be punished. Deer, camels, asses, monkeys, rats, reptiles, birds and flies are like one's own sons. Why should one look on them as something different? A person who is a householder should not make a great deal of effort in pursuing the

three objectives, [807] but should be content with whatever the time and the place provide. Objects of pleasure must be divided even among dogs, sinners and antyajas. The wife is accepted as part of one's own self, but even she must be used to welcome people. [808] One gives up one's life for the wife and even kills a father or a preceptor for her. When one gives up the sense of ownership in the wife, one has conquered what is unconquerable. This body is insignificant and attachment to it must end. It becomes worms, excrement or ashes. [809] Similarly, what is the attachment for the wife? The atman is like the sky and pervades everything. A person must devise a means of subsistence for himself from the leftovers of successful sacrifices. [810] In the end, a wise person gives up any sense of ownership and obtains a state of greatness. Through the riches obtained, every day, a man must separately share with gods, rishis, humans, creatures and ancestors and provide for his own self. In this way, he worships Purusha. If he possesses all the rights and the wealth required for performing sacrifices, he must follow the prescribed rites and perform agnihotra and other sacrifices. O king! However, the illustrious one who enjoys all the sacrifices is not satisfied as much through oblations offered through the fire's mouth as much as he is through oblations offered through the mouths of brahmanas. Therefore, as they deserve, kshetrajna must be worshipped by offering objects of pleasure and sacrificing to brahmanas, gods and mortals. Indeed, he is in brahmanas. If a brahmana possesses wealth, in krishna paksha in the month of Proshthapada, [811] depending on his wealth, he must perform funeral rites for his ancestors and their relatives. He must also perform these at the time of the summer and winter solstices, [812] during *vyatipata*, [813] at the end of a lunar tithi, during the eclipse of the sun and the moon, on the twelfth lunar day, when the nakshatra Shravana is in the ascendance, on the third lunar day in shukla paksha, [814] the ninth lunar day in the month of Kartika, [815] the four *ashtaka*s in the seasons of Hemanta and Shishira, [816] the seventh lunar day in shukla paksha in the month of Magha, the night of the full moon when the nakshatra Magha is in the ascendant, the days of *raka* and *anumati* when the nakshatra that led to the naming of the month is in the ascendant, [817] the twelfth lunar day when the nakshatras Anuradha, Shravana or the three

named Uttara [818] are in the ascendant, the eleventh lunar day when any of these three are in the ascendant [819] and when there is a conjunction between one's birth nakshatra and Shravana. These are the best of times and increase the welfare of men. Therefore, with all one's soul, one must try so that welfare and lifespan increase. Bathing, meditation, oblations, worship of gods and brahmanas and donations to ancestors, gods, men and creatures [820] are never destroyed. O king! For the sake of one's own prosperity, one must observe the rites at the time of sacraments for one's own self, one's wife and one's offspring and also at the time of shraddha and funeral rites. I will now describe the regions best suited for the performance of rites connected with dharma. These are the most sacred spots, where virtuous recipients are found. He [821] is an image of the illustrious one, who is in all mobile and immobile objects. People from brahmana lineages, possessing austerities and learning, are found there. Any place where Hari is worshipped is the most auspicious of places. These are regions where Ganga and the other rivers, famous in the Puranas, flow. O king! There are lakes like Pushkara; kshetras like Kurukshetra, resorted to by revered people; Gayashira; [822] Prayaga; Pulaha's hermitage; Naimisha; Phalguna; [823] Setu; [824] Prabhasa; Kushasthali; [825] Varanasi; Madhupuri; [826] Pampa; Bindusara; the hermitage of Narayana; [827] Nanda; [828] the hermitage of Rama and Sita; [829] and all the kulachalas, Mahendra, Malaya and the others. These are the most auspicious spots and Hari is worshipped there. If a person desires his benefit, he should reside in these places. If a person performs act of dharma there, the fruits are multiplied one thousand times. O lord of the earth! Wise and the most worthy of recipients have determined that Hari alone is a worthy recipient. All mobile and immobile objects are pervaded by him. O king! Gods, rishis, virtuous people and Brahma's sons and others were present, [830] when it was decided that Achyuta is the foremost recipient. The entire cosmic egg is like a gigantic tree and it is full of innumerable categories of living beings. However, since Achyuta is the foundation, his worship is tantamount to worshipping all beings and one's own self. He is the one who created the habitations for humans, inferior species, rishis and gods. The Purusha form lies down in the bodies of all these living beings. O king! In all these species,

the illustrious being exists in differing degrees. Therefore, though each is a worthy recipient, Purusha's respective presence varies, depending on the nature of the atman. O king! The wise ones saw that humans pointlessly disrespected each other. Therefore, in treta and the other yugas, [831] they instituted Hari's worship. Among those who worship Hari, some do it with faith and the required objects. But even if there is worship, if there is hatred towards men, the worship becomes futile. O Indra among kings! Among men, know that brahmanas are excellent recipients. Because of austerities, learning and satisfaction, they are like the Vedas, Hari's body. O king! Krishna is the atman of the universe. However, the dust of their feet purifies the three worlds and they are like the great divinity himself."'

Chapter 7(15)

'Narada said, "Some brahmanas are devoted to rites, others are devoted to austerities. Some are interested in studying and expounding. Some are engaged in jnana yoga. A person desiring to offer oblations to ancestors and gods should offer these to those who are devoted to jnana. In their absence, others can be recipients, depending on their worth. For rites connected with gods, two brahmanas must be fed. For those connected with ancestors, three must be fed. But in either case, one can also be fed. Even if a person is extremely affluent, at shraddha ceremonies, a large number should not be fed. If the time and the place is appropriate, one should not extend copious donations to one's own relatives, if this means that objects faithfully offered to worthy recipients become deficient. When the time and the place present themselves, food faithfully offered in the proper way to worthy recipients are like those offered to sages and the divinity Hari. They lead to everlasting satisfaction of desire. When food is shared among gods, rishis, creatures, one's own self and one's own relatives, all these must be looked upon as entities in whose atmans Purusha resides. A person who knows about dharma must not serve meat at shraddha ceremonies, or eat it. Food offered to sages brings the greatest pleasure when it does not involve injury to ani-

mals. For men who desire virtuous dharma, there is no dharma as supreme as that which does not involve chastisement of creatures, in thoughts, words and deeds. There are some learned people who know about sacrifices and who have no desires. Instead of performing sacrifices with rites, they control their atmans and use the lamp of knowledge to offer oblations. [832] On seeing those who sacrifice with sacrificial objects, [833] creatures become terrified and say, 'This one is without compassion and ignorant. He will certainly kill me, desiring to take life.' Therefore, a person who knows about dharma should be satisfied with the food of sages, obtained by chance. Day after day, he must always undertake the daily rites. A person who knows about dharma must avoid five kinds of adharma—*vidharma, paradharma, abhasa, upama* and *chhala*. These are five branches of adharma. Obstructions to dharma are known as vidharma. Dharma urged by someone else is known as paradharma. [834] *Upadharma* is that followed by insolent heretics. Debating with words is chhala. [835] If a man deviates from his own dharma and wilfully does whatever he wants, that is known as abhasa. If one follows one's natural and ordained dharma, why is that not capable of bringing about serenity? A person who doesn't possess riches should not seek to acquire wealth for the sake of subsistence, or for pursuing dharma or artha. His conduct must be like the great snake, without desire and without activity. There is happiness in contentment, lack of desire and delight in one's own atman. Driven by desire and avarice and seeking artha, why should one run around in all the directions? When one is content in one's mind, all the directions are auspicious. For a person wearing footwear, there is no danger from gravel or thorns. O king! A person who is content will ensure his subsistence with water alone. However, if one serves the genital organs and the stomach, one will be like a miserable creature kept at home. [836] If a brahmana is not content, because of the senses and avarice, his energy, learning, austerities and fame are dissipated and his learning is also destroyed. When a person is hungry or thirsty, there is an end to desire. Similarly, anger is also destroyed when its fruits result. [837] However, even if a person conquers and enjoys all the directions in the world, greed is never satisfied. O king! There are many learned people, with a great deal of experience and capable

of dispelling the doubts of others. They are fit to be the leaders of assemblies. Even then, because of their discontentment, they have fallen down. One must conquer desire through determination. Anger is conquered by giving up desire. Greed is conquered by considering what is beneficial and what is not beneficial. Fear is conquered by ascertaining the truth. Grief and delusion can be conquered through reflection, insolence through association with the great, obstructions to yoga through silence, and violence through lack of desire in material objects. Misery to creatures can be conquered through compassion, unhappiness because of destiny, through meditation, ailments to the body through yoga and energy and sleep through serving sattva. Rajas and tamas can be conquered through sattva, and sattva through withdrawal. Through great devotion to the preceptor, a man can easily conquer all these. By bestowing the lamp of knowledge, the preceptor is the illustrious one himself. If a person has the wicked intelligence that he is no different from an ordinary mortal, all his knowledge is like cleaning an elephant. [838] He is the illustrious one himself, the supreme lord and Purusha. In this world, he [839] is thought of as a human being, but his feet are sought after by the lords of yoga. All the principles that are ordained are for the single-minded objective of controlling the six categories. [840] If the pursuit of yoga does not lead to their end, it is a complete waste of effort. Pursuits undertaken for artha do not attain the end pursued through yoga. Like that, pure rites observed by a wicked person do not lead to any benefit. With a desire to conquering the mind, one must be alone and without any attachments. He must seek refuge in a solitary place. As a mendicant, he must subsist on what he begs as alms. O king! In a pure and level region, he must spread out his seat. He must sit down, with his body upright, steady, comfortable and balanced. He must chant 'Oum!' He must control prana and apana through *puraka*, *kumbhaka* and *rechaka*. [841] As long as the mind is unable to give up desire, the gaze must be fixed on the tip of his nose. Affected by desire, the mind wanders around here and there. Whenever that happens, a learned person will gradually restrain it and confine it within the core of the heart. As one continuously practices this, within a short period of time, the practitioner's heart attains nirvana, like a fire without any kin-

dling. When one is not affected by desire and other things, all the activities of the mind become tranquil. The consciousness is touched by the bliss of the brahman and does not want to ever come out again. If a person becomes a mendicant, withdrawing from the material field of the three objectives, but subsequently pursues these objectives again, that shameless mendicant is like one who eats vomited out food. There are those who consider the mortal body to be different from the atman, destined to become excrement, worms or ashes. If they again identify with the body and praise it, they are the vilest of persons.

'"Avoidance of rites by a grihastha, the giving up of vows by a brahmachari, residence in a village by an ascetic [842] and the agitation of the senses by a mendicant [843]—these are indeed the vilest in the respective ashramas and amount to fraud in the ashramas. They are confounded by the divinity's maya. Out of compassion, one should disregard them. If a person realizes his own atman, that supreme knowledge cleanses his mind. That being the case, for what purpose and for whom, should a lustful person nourish the body? The body is said to be a chariot, the senses are the horses, the mind, the lord of the senses, is the reins, the objects of senses are the paths, intelligence is the charioteer, and the heart is the bondage that has been created by the lord. The ten breaths of life are the spokes, [844] dharma and adharma are the two wheels and because of ego, the jivatman identifies himself as the charioteer. It is said that the sound of 'Oum' is the bow, the jivatman is the arrow and the paramatman is the target. Love, hatred, greed, grief, illusion, fear, pride, insolence, dishonour, jealousy, deceitfulness, violence, intolerance, passion, distractedness, hunger and sleep are the enemies naturally caused by rajas and tamas. Rarely does sattva naturally cause these. This chariot in the form of human body, with its constituent parts, is under a person's control. One possesses the sword of knowledge, sharpened by serving at the feet of great people. One should draw on Achyuta's strength until the enemies have been destroyed. When a person is content with the internal bliss, he is tranquil and can give this up. [845] Otherwise, if the charioteer is inattentive, the senses will be like wicked horses that drag the chariot along wicked paths, where it is hurled before bandits in the form

of material objects. With the horses and the charioteer, the bandits fling him into a well of blinding darkness in the form of samsara, where he suffers from great fear of death. The Vedas mention two kinds of tasks—pravritti and nivritti. One is whirled around through pravritti. Through nivritti, one obtains immortality. Rites that require a lot of objects and involve violence, undertaken for satisfying desires; agnihotra and others that cause lack of peace; darsha, purnamasa, chaturmasya, *pashu, huta* and *prahuta*—these are known as *ishta*. The construction of temples, gardens and tanks and the distribution of things required to sustain life are examples of *purta*. [846] When material objects mixed with ghee are offered into a fire, they become smoke, the night, krishna paksha, dakshinayana and soma. But they return as herbs and plants. O lord of the earth! As food, they become semen and are born again, after having followed *pitri yana*. Going through one step after another, they are born again. [847] From the time of birth, if a dvija is cleansed through the sixteen samskaras, any oblations offered to the senses through rites and sacrifices serve the lamp of knowledge. He offers the senses into the mind, the mind, the result of vaikarika ahamkara, is offered into speech, speech is offered into the aggregate of letters [848] and that sound is offered into Omkara. Omkara is merged into Bindu, Bindu into Nada, Nada into Prana and Prana into Mahat. [849] Agni, Surya, day, evening, shukla paksha, raka, uttarayana and Brahma are steps, followed by vishva, taijasa, prajna and turiya. After this, the atman is freed. [850] Pitri yana and *deva yana* have been described in the Vedas. A person who possesses the insight of the sacred texts is not confounded. He always exists at the beginning and at the end of living entities. He is inside and outside. He is cause and effect. He is knowledge and the object of knowledge. He is speech and the object of speech. He is himself darkness and light. A reflection in an image is not real, but is accepted as real. In that way, because reality is difficult to establish, objects perceived by the senses are accepted as real. This [851] is a shadow of earth and the other elements. But it is not a compound or a mixture. It is not any of them, singly or collectively. Therefore, it is unreal. The elements are the cause behind the body. [852] Without the limbs of the body, the objects of the senses cannot be perceived to exist. When the aggregate is

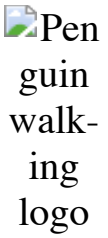
unreal, the constituent parts must also be unreal. If the aggregate and the constituent parts are distinct, any parallel between them must be an error. This is also the case with states of being awake and being asleep. Both are like dreams. [853] This is also true of the injunctions of the sacred texts. A sage realizes that differences in thoughts, action and materials are unreal for the atman. Therefore, he gives up the three states of wakefulness, sleeping and dreaming. [854] He has the insight that cause and effect are the same, like the thread and a piece of cloth. This is said to be the perception of *advaita*, [855] any differentiation being unreal. O Partha! The surrender of all tasks to the supreme brahman, in thoughts, words and deeds, is said to be *kriya-advaita*. When one's own self, the wife, the son, all other creatures and artha and kama are regarded as one, this is said to be *dravya-advaita*. O king! As long as there is no calamity, a man must perform whatever tasks are recommended for him and not prohibited, wherever and however. O king! If a man follows his own tasks, as recommended in the Vedas and otherwise, and is also devoted to him, [856] he attains his state, even if he is a householder. O lord of men! You faced many kinds of insurmountable difficulties. However, because of the lord, you tided over them. By serving at his lotus feet, you conquered your enemies, who were like diggajas, and performed sacrifices.

'"In earlier times, in a great kalpa, I was a gandharva named Upabarhana. I was extremely revered by the gandharvas. My body was beautiful in form, attractive, fragrant and handsome. The women loved me and in my own city I was always intoxicated and lascivious. Once, in a sacrifice performed by the gods, a large number of gandharvas and apsaras were invited by the creators of the universe [857] to chant about Hari's glory. Getting to know and possessing knowledge about singing, I went there, surrounded by women, and sang. Because of the disrespect I had shown, the creators of the universe used their energy to curse me. [858] 'You have shown disrespect and your prosperity will be destroyed. Leave and immediately be born as a shudra.' Hence, I was born through a female servant. Nevertheless, I served and associated with those who knew about the brahman. Therefore, I have been born as Brahma's son. The dharma that destroys the sins of household-

ers has been described to you. Through this, a grihastha can easily obtain the goal intended by a sannyasi. In this world of men, you are extremely fortunate. Sages who purify the worlds have themselves come to your house, where the supreme brahman secretly resided in human form. He is the brahman whom great people seek out for the sake of kaivalya, nirvana and feelings of bliss. He is your beloved well-wisher and the son of your maternal uncle. He is your atman and revered preceptor, though he acted for your sake. Using their intelligence, Bhava and the one born from the lotus [859] and others can themselves not describe his true form. Those who have withdrawn worship him in devotion and silence. May the lord of the Satvatas show us his favours.”’

Shri-Shuka said, ‘The bull among the Bharata lineage heard what the devarshi had said. Extremely delighted and overwhelmed with love, he worshipped Krishna. The sage was worshipped and took his leave from Krishna and Partha. Hearing that Krishna was the supreme brahman, Partha was greatly surprised. The separate lineages of Daksha’s daughters have also been described—gods, asuras, humans and mobile and immobile objects.’

This ends the Seventh Skandha.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Eighth Skandha

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Chapter 8(1)

The king [860] said, 'O preceptor! I have heard in detail about Svayambhuva's [861] lineage, in which, different kinds of creators of the universe were born. However, also tell us about the other Manus. O brahmana! We are listenting. Tell us about Hari's birth and great deeds in those manvantaras. The wise ones sing about them. O brahmana! What has the illustrious doer and creator of the universe done in the past, what is he doing now and what will he do in the future?'

The rishi [862] replied, 'In this kalpa, six manvantaras, Svayambhuva and the others, have passed. The first one, with the creation of the gods and others, has been described to you. Manu had two daughters, Akuti and Devahuti. To instruct knowledge about dharma, the illustrious one was born as a son. O extender of the Kuru lineage! The deeds of the illustrious Kapila have already been described. I will now tell you what the illustrious Yajna did. [863] The lord who was Shatarupa's husband [864] no longer had any attachment for the objects of pleasure and desire. Having given up the kingdom, with his wife, he entered the forest to perform austerities. On the banks of the Sunanda, he stood, with one foot touching the ground, for one hundred years. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! While tormenting himself through these terrible austerities, he said the following. Manu said, "He brought consciousness to the universe, but no one in the universe can bring consciousness to him. [865] He is awake when everything else sleeps. No one can know him, but he knows everything. His atman resides everywhere in this universe, in everything that exists in this universe. Therefore, one should only enjoy what has been given by him and not accept someone else's wealth. Though he sees, he cannot be seen by any eye. His vision never diminishes. The divinity is the refuge of all creatures and Suparna must always be worshipped. [866] He has no beginning, end or middle, no notion of own or belonging to others, no inside or outside. Everything ascribed to the universe [867] emanates from him. Therefore, his greatness is the only truth in the universe. The universe is his form and he is known by different names—the controller, truth, self-illuminating, without origin and the ancient one. Through his powers and energy, he executes creation and the

other things. [868] However, using his knowledge, he exists without any action. Therefore, to end action, rishis first urge people to undertake action. A person who engages in this way, [869] generally attains emancipation. The illustrious lord undertakes action, but is not touched by them. He is completely satisfied by the benefit brought to his atman. Those who follow him do not suffer. He is learned and without ahamkara, acting for our sakes. He is without desire. He is complete and is not urged by anyone else. To instruct men, he sticks to his own path. I seek refuge in the lord. He is the one who thinks of all kinds of dharma." Controlled, he recited this mantropanishad. On seeing this, the hungry asuras and yatudhanas rushed towards him. Seeing them there, Yajna Hari, who is everywhere, surrounded by Yamas and gods, killed them. He then ruled heaven. [870] Agni's son, Svarochisha was the second Manu. His chief sons were Dyumat, Sushena and Rochishmat. At that time, the Indra was Rochana and the gods were Tushita and others. [871] Urja, Stambha and others were the saptarshis and they knew about the brahman. The rishi Vedashira had a wife named Tushita [872] and through her, the lord [873] was born and known as Vibhu. He did not marry and instructed eighty-eight thousand sages, who were firm in their vows, and they followed his vow of brahmacharya. The third Manu was Uttama, Priyavrata's son. O king! His chief sons were Pavana, Srinjaya and Yajnahotra. Pramada and the other sons of Vasishtha were the saptarshis. The gods were Satyas, Vedashrutas and Bhadras [874] and Satyajit was Indra. The illustrious Purushottama was born as the son of Sunrita, Dharma's wife. He was known as Satyasena and the Satyavratas [875] were born with him. The yakshas and rakshasas were false, wicked in conduct and evil. They harmed creatures. As a friend of Satyajit, he [876] killed them and the large number of bhutas. The fourth Manu was named Tapasa and he was Uttama's brother. He had ten sons—Prithu, Khyati, Nara, Ketu and others. At that time, the gods were Satyakas, Haris and Viras and the lord [877] was Trishikha. During Tapasa manvantara, the saptarshis were Jyoti, Dhama and others. O king! As the sons of Vidhriti, the gods also had the name of Vaidhritis. Through their own energy, they nurtured the Vedas, which had been lost over a period of time. The illustrious one was born through Harini,

Harimedha's wife. He was known as Hari and he saved the Indra among elephants from the crocodile.'

The king asked, 'O Badarayana's son! We wish to hear about this from you. How did Hari save the lord of elephants from the crocodile? The illustrious Uttamashloka Hari's account is great, sacred, praiseworthy, auspicious and beneficial, wherever it is chanted.'

Suta said, 'O brahmanas! Parikshit was seated in *praya* [878] and he urged Badarayana's son to describe this account. In the assembly of sages who wished to hear, he was delighted and applauded the king. He spoke.'

Chapter 8(2)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O king! There was a best among mountains, famous as Trikuta. It was beautiful, ten thousand yojanas in height, and was surrounded by the Kshiroda ocean. In every direction, its expanse was as much as its height. It had three summits, made of gold, silver and iron, and it illuminated the ocean of milk, the directions and the sky. There were many other peaks, colourful because of ores and jewels. It was covered with many kinds of trees, creepers and shrubs and there were the sounds of waterfalls. In every direction, its feet were washed by waves of milk, which made the ground, studded with emeralds and pebbles, appear dark green. The caverns were full of Siddhas, charanas, gandharvas, vidyadharas, giant serpents, kinnaras and apsaras, who sported there. The caves echoed and resounded with the tones of singing, and proud lions, suspecting the presence of an enemy, roared in intolerance. The valleys were ornamented with herds of many kinds of wild animals. The divine groves had colourful trees and resounded with the calls of birds. There were rivers and lakes filled with sparkling water, with the shores filled with sand mixed with gems. When celestial women bathed in the waters, these became fragrant and the wind bore that scent along. In one of those valleys, there was a grove that belonged to the great-souled and illustrious Varuna. It was named Ritumat and celestial women sported there. In every direction, it was decorated with di-

vine trees that always had flowers and fruit—mandara, parijata, *patala, ashoka, champaka,* chuta, *priyala, panasa, amra, amrataka, kramuka, narikela, kharjura, bijapuraka, madhuka, sala, tala, tamala, asana, arjuna, arishta, udumbara,* plaksha, *vata, kimshuka, chandana, pichumarda, kovidara, sarala, suradaru, draksha, ikshu, rambha, jambu, badari, aksha, abhaya, amalaka, bilva, kapittha, jambira, bhallataka* and others. That lake was radiant with extremely large golden lotuses. It dazzled because of water lilies, white lotuses, blue lotuses and lotuses with one hundred petals. There was the buzzing of intoxicated bees and the calling of birds. The place was full of swans, karandavas, chakravakas and cranes. There were the calls of waterfowl, lapwings and gallinules. [879] The water was filled with the filaments of lotuses and was agitated because of the movement of fish and turtles. The place was surrounded by kadamba, *vetasa*, *nala*, *nipa, vanjulaka, kunda, kurubaka,* ashoka, *shirisha, kutaja, inguda, kubjaka, svarna-yuthi,* naga, types of *punnaga, mallika, shatapatra* and nets of species of *madhavi*. [880] The banks were beautiful with other trees dense with the flowers and fruits of all seasons.

'Once, on that grove near the mountain, the leader of a herd of elephants wandered around, accompanied by female elephants. It crushed the various kinds of bamboo, cane and reeds, shrubs with thorns and large creepers and trees. At its mere scent, lions, Indras among elephants, tigers and other predatory animals, rhinos, giant serpents, white and black *sharabha*s [881] and yak fled in fear. However, because of the favours shown by it, wolves, boars, buffaloes, bears, porcupines, *gopuccha*s, [882] hyenas, monkeys and other small animals like deer and hares were not scared and continued to roam around. Surrounded by the female and male elephants, he suffered from the heat. Baby elephants followed him and he exuded musth. Because of the weight of his body, he made every part of the mountain tremble. Swarms of bees followed him, drinking the musth. The breeze that blew from the lake bore the scent of pollen from lotuses. With crazy and intoxicated eyes, he smelt that it was not far away. Therefore, he quickly advanced towards the lake. He bathed in the sparkling waters, which were like amrita. It was cool and perfumed with pollen from lilies and lotuses. He

drew the water up with his trunk and drank until he was satisfied. He bathed himself in the water and all his exhaustion was dispelled. As kind as a householder towards members of the family, the indomitable one was kind towards the female elephants and the baby elephants. He made them bathe and drink. He drew up the cool water with his trunk and sprayed them with it. Because of the unborn one's maya, the pitiable one did not consider the imminent hardship. O king! Urged by destiny, a powerful crocodile caught hold of his leg. The extremely strong elephant faced this calamity and tried as much as he could, using all his strength. On seeing that the leader of the herd was suffering, the female elephants were distressed. But the crocodile was swift and stronger. When he was being dragged away, the other elephants were incapable of saving him by grabbing him from the rear. Instead, they screamed. The Indra among elephants and the crocodile fought in this way with each other, inside the water and outside it. O lord of the earth! This continued for one thousand years. Finding that they were still alive, even the immortals thought that this was wonderful. After this extremely long period of time, the Indra among elephant's mental and physical strength was depleted. Exhausted, he was dragged into the water. However, as is the case with all residents of the water, the opposite was the case with the crocodile. The Indra among elephants faced this hardship to his life and body. He was helpless and incapable. For a very long time, he thought about how he might free himself. After having reflected, he arrived at a decision. "The other elephants, my relatives, are unable to save me from this catastrophe. How can the female elephants possess the powers to free me? Because of destiny, I am in the crocodile's bonds. Therefore, I must seek shelter with the supreme refuge. He is the powerful lord. Death is like a giant serpent and is pursuing me with its terrible and irresistible force. However, if those who are terrified seek refuge with him, he is the saviour and even Death runs away in fear. I seek refuge with him."'

Chapter 8(3)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Having used his intelligence to determine this, he fixed his mind in his heart. He meditated on the supreme one, chanting a mantra he had been taught in his earlier birth. [883]

'The Indra among elephants said, "Oum! I bow down before the illustrious one. He is in all this consciousness. He is the original Purusha and seed. He is the supreme lord. I meditate on him. This universe exists in him. It is from him that it has been created. He is the cause behind this effect. I seek refuge with the supreme and self-originating one. It is because of his own maya that all of this is immersed in his atman. It is sometimes manifest and sometimes, it is not manifest. [884] He sees everything and is a witness to both. His atman is the source of everything. May the supreme of the supreme protect me. In the course of time, everything is reduced to the five gross elements, the guardians of the world and all kinds of causes. There is a deep and impenetrable darkness. But beyond this, in that state, the lord alone illuminates. The gods and the rishis do not know him. How can a mere creature like me approach him or describe him? The nature of the actor is hidden behind the roles he performs. It is extremely difficult to understand his movements. May he save me. Extremely virtuous sages, free of all attachments, wish to see his extremely auspicious feet. So do those who faultlessly execute many kinds of vows in the forest. He is in the atmans of all beings. May that well-wisher be my destination. He has no birth or deeds. He has no names or forms, nor qualities or faults. However, for the sake of the creation and destruction of the worlds, using his own maya, he always assumes these. I bow down to that supreme lord. He is the brahman, infinite in his powers. He has no form. He has many kinds of forms. I bow down to the one whose deeds are extraordinary. I bow down to the one whose atman is the lamp. He is the paramatman who is the witness. I bow down to the one who is impossible to approach through words, thoughts or consciousness. The learned obtain him through sattva and the transcending of karma. [885] I bow down to the lord of kaivalya, the one who bestows the bliss of nirvana. I bow down before the one who assumes the dharma of the gunas and appears as serene, terrible and ignorant. [886] He is impartial and

does not discriminate. I bow down before the one who is the reservoir of knowledge. I bow down to kshetrajna, the controller of everything, the witness. He is Purusha and his atman is the foundation. I bow down to the one who is the source of Prakriti. He is the one who perceives all the senses and their qualities. What is said to be real is unreal and is like a shadow that always indicates his reflection. I bow down to you. I bow down. I bow down to you, the cause behind everything. He is the one who has no cause. He is the one who is the wonderful cause. He is the great ocean who is the source of all the sacred texts. I bow down to the one who is the refuge, the one who bestows emancipation. He is the one whose consciousness is hidden, like a fire in the attributes of the wood. His mind manifests itself and agitates the gunas. [887] You reveal yourself to those who give up the sacred texts, with sentiments of transcending karma. I bow down to you. An animal like me has sought refuge with you. You are the one who frees from bonds. You are the liberator. You are great in your compassion. I bow down before the one who has no decay. Your own portions are manifest in the minds of all embodied beings. You are the direct witness. I bow down to the great and illustrious one. There are people who are attached to their own selves, their sons and daughters, their homes, their riches and their relatives. They find it extremely difficult to obtain you. You are free of attachment to any of the gunas. Those who have realized their atmans meditate on you in the cores of their hearts. Your atman is the reservoir of knowledge. I bow down to the illustrious lord. Those who desire to be free of dharma, kama and artha worship you and obtain the desired objective. He bestows an undecaying body, [888] not to speak of other benedictions. May the compassionate one free me. Those who are single-mindedly devoted to the illustrious one do not desire anything else. They are immersed in an ocean of bliss and chant about his extraordinary and extremely auspicious deeds. He is the undecaying and supreme brahman. He is the supreme lord. He is not manifest. He can be approached through the yoga of adhyatma. He is beyond the compass of the senses. He is subtle and extremely distant. He is the infinite and original one. I worship the pervasive one. Through his portions, he creates Brahma and the other gods, the Vedas, the worlds, mobile and immobile objects, the

differences of names and forms and other minor entities. They are like flames issuing from Agni, or rays issuing from the sun. They emerge and are repeatedly withdrawn again. He is the one who is radiant in his own luminosity. All these flows of gunas, the intelligence, the mind, the senses and the creation of bodies is like that. He is not a god or an asura. He is not a mortal or an inferior species. He is not man, woman, eunuch or animal. He is not guna or karma. He is not manifestation or lack of manifestation. He is not what is left after these. [889] He transcends everything that is left. I do not wish to live for a long time in this world, or in the next world. What is the point of an existence where the inside and the outside are enveloped? [890] I desire a time when all this, the covering for realization of the atman, is destroyed and I am liberated. He is the creator of the universe. Though he transcends the universe, he is the universe. He is the knowledge behind this universe. His atman is in the universe. He is without origin. I prostrate myself before the supreme one, the brahman. There are those who use yoga to burn up karma. There are those who use yoga to cleanse their hearts. Those yogis see him. I bow down to the lord of yoga. I bow down. I bow down before the one whose force is impossible to withstand. He is the one with the three kinds of powers. [891] He is the intelligence behind all the gunas. He offers shelter to those who seek refuge. His powers are indomitable. He cannot be reached by those who follow the path of the senses. People do not know their own atmans because his powers rob them of their intelligence. His glory is extremely difficult to comprehend. I seek refuge with the illustrious one."'

Shri-Shuka said, 'Thus, the Indra among elephants described him, in no particular way. Brahma and others have many kinds of signs and pride themselves on these. Since the illustrious one is in the atmans of everyone, no one approached him. [892] However, Hari is in the atmans of everyone and he appeared. The abode of the universe understood that he was afflicted and had also heard the prayer. Borne aloft by Garuda, he quickly appeared, along with the gods, who were praising him. The one with the chakra as a weapon arrived where the Indra among elephants was. Inside the water, he had been powerfully seized and was afflicted. However, he saw Hari arrive

in the sky, aloft Garuda and wielding the chakra. With difficulty, he raised a lotus in his trunk and held it up. He said, "O illustrious Narayana! O universal preceptor! I bow down to you." The one without origin saw that he was afflicted and quickly descended. Full of compassion, he quickly dragged him out of the lake, along with the crocodile. He took the Indra among elephants out. While everyone looked on, Hari severed the crocodile's mouth with his chakra.'

Chapter 8(4)

Shri-Shuka said, 'With Brahma and Ishana at the forefront, the gods, the rishis and the gandharvas praised Hari's deed and showered down flowers. Celestial drums were sounded. Gandharvas danced and sang. The rishis, charanas and Siddhas praised Purushottama. The crocodile instantly assumed an extremely wonderful form. Huhu, supreme among gandharvas, was thus freed from Devala's curse. [893] He bowed his head down before the lord and controller, the undecaying Uttamashloka. He chanted the virtuous account about the deeds of the one who was a reservoir of glory. With the lord having shown him mercy, he bowed down to him and circumambulated him. While everyone looked on, cleansed of all sin, he went to his own world. Having been touched by the illustrious one, the Indra among elephants was freed from the bondage of ignorance. He obtained a form that was just like that of the illustrious one, four-armed and clad in yellow garments. Earlier, he was the king of Pandya and supreme among Dravidas. He was known by the name of Indradyumna and was devoted to vows dedicated to Vishnu. Once, controlling his atman, he was worshipping lord Hari and had adopted a vow of silence. He was an ascetic with matted hair and was immersed in Achyuta. He was worshipping him in a hermitage in kulachala. [894] The immensely illustrious sage [895] was wandering around as he willed, surrounded by a large number of disciples, and arrived there. He saw that he was silent and did not offer him the objects of worship. He remained seated there, in solitude. At this, the rishi was enraged. He cursed

him. “This wicked and evil-souled one is ignorant and has insulted a brahmana today. Let him be plunged into darkness, as stupid in intelligence as an elephant.” O king! Cursing him in this way, the illustrious Agastya left with his followers. Indra, the royal sage, accepted this as the will of providence. He was born in the elephant species and this destroys all realization of the atman. However, because his sentiments were those of worshipping Hari, despite having become an elephant, he remembered everything. Thus, the leader of elephants was saved by the one who has no origin, the one with a lotus in his navel. He elevated him to the status of becoming his own companion. Having performed this extraordinary deed, praised by gandharvas, Siddhas and gods with him, and astride Garuda, he returned to his own residence. O great king! I have described this to you now, about how the king among elephants was delivered by Krishna’s wonderful deed. O noble Kuru! If a person listens to this, he obtains heaven and fame. The sins of kali yuga become less and bad dreams are destroyed. Dvijas who desire their own benefit get up in the morning. Purifying themselves, they chant this and bad dreams are instantly destroyed. O supreme among the Kuru lineage! Hari was pleased with the Indra among elephants. While all the creatures heard, the lord who is in all creatures spoke to him.

‘The illustrious one said, “There is this lake, this mountain, this cavern and this grove. There are cane, reeds, bamboo, creepers and divine trees. There are the peaks and the lords, Brahma, Shiva and I. This Kshiroda ocean is my beloved residence and so is this radiant Shveta-dvipa. There are shrivatsa, Koustubha, the garland, and my club Koumadaki. There are Sudarshana and Panchajanya and Suparna, lord of birds. Shesha is my subtle portion and the goddess Shri seeks refuge with me. There are Brahma, the rishi Narada, you and Prahlada. There are fish, tortoise, boar and other avataras assumed by me. There are my infinitely sacred deeds and Surya, Soma and Agni. There is the sound of ‘Oum’. There is the truth that is not manifest. There are cattle and brahmanas and undecaying dharma. There are Daksha’s daughters, the wives of Dharma, Soma and Kashyapa. There are the rivers Ganga, Sarasvati, Nanda and Kalindi and there is the white elephant. [896] There are Dhruva, the seven brahmana rishis and men who are

praised in shlokas. When one arises at the end of the night, one should restrain oneself and be controlled. If a person then remembers all of these as my forms, he will be freed from every kind of sin. O dear one! At the end of the night, if a person awakes and praises me, [897] at the end of his life, I grant him a great destination."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'Having instructed him in this way, Hrishikesha blew on his excellent conch shell. Gladdening the arrays of gods, he ascended the best among birds.'

Chapter 8(5)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O king! I have told you about Hari's sacred deed of freeing the Indra among elephants, one that destroys all sins. Now hear about Raivata manvantara. The fifth Manu, named Raivata, was Tapasa Manu's brother. His sons were Bali, Vindhya and others and Arjuna was the eldest. O king! Vibhu was the Indra and Bhutarayas and others were the gods. The brahmanas were Hiranyaroma, Vedashira, Urdhvabahu and others. [898] Through Shubhra's wife, Vikuntha, the illustrious Vaikuntha was himself born. Through his portions, other supreme gods known as the Vaikunthas were also born. The goddess Rama [899] desired it, and to please her, he created the world known as Vaikuntha, revered by the worlds. I have already described his deeds, qualities and great generosity. But all of Vishnu's qualities can only be described by someone who can count all the particles of dust on earth. The sixth Manu was named Chakshusha and he was the son of Chakshusha. [900] Among Chakshusha's foremost sons were Puru, Purusha and Sudyumna. Mantradruma was Indra and the large number of gods were Apyas and others. O king! The sages were Havishmat, Viraka and others. Through Vairaja's wife, Sambhuti, the illustrious divinity, the lord of the universe, used his portion to be born as their son and his name was Ajita. It was he who had the ocean churned, yielding nectar for the gods. In the form of a tortoise, he held up Mandara and moved around in the water.'

The king asked, 'O brahmana! How did the illustrious one get the ocean of milk churned? Why was it done? Why did he hold up the mountain and move around in the water? After the gods had obtained the amrita, what else happened? Tell me all this about the illustrious one's supremely wonderful deeds. Hardships have tormented my mind for an extremely long period of time. Therefore, when you describe the glories of the lord of the Satvatas, I am not satisfied.'

Suta said, 'O brahmanas! Dvaipayana's illustrious son was thus asked. He welcomed this and started to describe Hari's valour.'

Shri-Shuka said, 'In a battle, the gods were attacked by the asuras with sharp weapons and were slaughtered. Large numbers lost their lives and fell down and did not rise up again. O king! Indra was cursed by Durvasa and the three worlds lost their prosperity. [901] Sacrifices and rites were destroyed. Hearing about this, the great Indra, Varuna and the large number of other gods had a meeting of consultation. But they could not decide what should be done. All of them therefore went to Brahma's assembly hall, on the summit of Meru. Prostrating themselves before Parameshthi, they told him everything. He saw that Indra, Vayu and the others were deprived of their spirits and had lost their radiance. The lord saw that the worlds had lost everything auspicious and that the asuras were thriving. He meditated in his mind and remembered the supreme being. With a pleasant countenance, the supreme and illustrious one spoke to the gods. "I, Bhava, you, asuras and others, humans, inferior species, trees and those born from sweat—all of us have been created from his avataras, lineages and portions. Let all of us go and seek refuge with the one without decay. There is no one who should be killed, no one who should be protected. There is no one to be neglected and no one to be partially shown favours. Nevertheless, for the sake of creation, preservation and destruction, at the right time, he assumes attributes of sattva, rajas and tamas. This is a time for creation and preservation, when he accepts sattva for the sake of the welfare of embodied creatures. Therefore, let us go and seek refuge with the preceptor of the worlds. He loves the gods and will grant us the good fortune." O destroyer of enemies! Having said this, with the gods, Brahma went to the abode of the unvanquished one,

which lies beyond the darkness. There, controlling his senses and using divine speech, the lord praised and prayed to the one whom he had never seen, but whom he had heard about from the texts.

'Brahma said, "O one who does not change! O truth! O infinite! O original one! O one who resides in every heart! O one not subject to transformation! O incomprehensible one! O one swifter than thought! O one who cannot be described in speech! We bow down to the supreme divinity, the one who should be worshipped. He is the one who knows about the breath of life, the mind, the intelligence and the atman. He is the one who manifests himself as the senses and their objects. He does not sleep. He is without a physical body that suffers. He is not affected by shadow or sunshine. [902] He is without decay. He is as pervasive as the sky. He is the three yugas. We seek refuge with him. For those with birth, it is his energy that makes the wheel of life move swiftly. It is permeated by the mind and there are fifteen spokes. [903] There are three naves. [904] On eight fellies, it moves like lightning. [905] It is said that he is the rim. We bow down to the one who is the truth. He has a single complexion [906] and is beyond tamas. He is not manifest and cannot be seen. He is infinite and has no limits. He has seated himself on Suparna's back. Using yoga as a chariot, the patient worship him. No one is able to overcome his maya. Because of this, people are confounded and do not know the truth. He is the supreme lord who alone conquers his own gunas. He controls beings, without any partiality. We bow down to him. Inside and outside, we have been fashioned out of his favourite body of sattva. However, if we, nor the rishis, can comprehend his subtle nature, how can asuras and others, dominated by others? [907] He has himself created this earth as his feet and there are four types of beings there. That great being is the one who controls himself. May the great one, supreme in his powers, show us his favours. He is pervasive in his valour and the waters are his semen, used by living beings for generation and nourishment. That is also true of the worlds and all the guardians of the worlds. May the one who is great in his powers be pleased with us. It is said that Soma, the source of strength, food and lifespans for the residents of heaven, is the infinite one's mind. He [908] is the lord of the trees that provide a means of subsistence for

beings. Let the one who is great in his powers be pleased with us. Agni, the source of wealth, was born so that all the various kinds of rites could be performed. He exists in the ocean and inside, digesting food. [909] Agni is the mouth through which he receives oblations. Let the one who is great in his powers be pleased with us. His eye is the sun god, who proceeds along deva yana. The three Vedas are in him. He is the brahman, the goal of emancipation. He is the path to emancipation and immortality. But he is also death. Let the one who is great in his powers be pleased with us. Mobile and immobile objects owe their breath of life, their strength and their energy to the wind. Like companions following an emperor, we follow the wind god and the wind owes its origin to him. Let the one who is great in his powers be pleased with us. The directions are his ears. His heart is the space within the body. The sky, the breath of life, the senses, the mind and the secondary airs in the breath of life emerged from Purusha's navel. Let the one who is great in his powers be pleased with us. The great Indra and the gods owe their strength to his favours. Girisha originated from his anger and Virinchi from his intelligence. The pores in his body created the Vedas and the rishis. Prajapati emerged from his genital organs. Let the one who is great in his powers be pleased with us. Shri emerged from his chest and the ancestors from his shadow. Dharma emerged from between his breasts and adharma from his back. The firmament emerged from his head and the apsaras from his pleasure. Let the one who is great in his powers be pleased with us. The brahmanas and the mysterious Vedas emerged from his mouth. The kshatriyas are the strength of his arms. The skilled vaishyas emerged from his thighs. The ignorant shudras emerged from his feet. Let the one who is great in his powers be pleased with us. Avarice emerged from his lower lip and affection from his upper lip. Splendour emerged from his nose. Desire, characteristic of animals, emerged from his touch. Yama emerged from his eyebrows and time from his eyelashes. Let the one who is great in his powers be pleased with us. It is said that material objects, lifespan, karma, gunas and the attributes of this material world were created by his yoga maya, which is extremely difficult to understand. The learned reject all this. [910] Let the one who is great in his powers be pleased with us. I bow down to the

one whose power is dormant. He is completely independent and has achieved everything in his atman. He is not attached to the gunas and various kinds of conduct maya fashions. He is like the air. [911] This is what you are. Show yourself to us, so that our senses can perceive you. We have sought refuge with you. We desire to see your smiling lotus face. O lord! From time to time, depending on your will, you have yourself assumed different kinds of forms. O illustrious one! You have accomplished tasks that are extremely difficult for us to undertake. Embodied beings undertake tasks with a great deal of difficulty. But these yield little, or nothing at all, because they are afflicted by material objects. But that's not the case with us, those who resort to you. If it is rendered to the lord, even a little bit of action is not futile. If it is offered to Purusha, his atman ensures benefit to those whom he loves. If the root of a tree is sprinkled with water, the trunk and the branches are nourished. The worship of Vishnu, who is in everyone's atman, is like that. I bow down to the infinite one. You and your acts are impossible to comprehend. You are nirguna. You are the lord of gunas and are present as a reservoir of sattva."'

Chapter 8(6)

Shri-Shuka said, 'The large number of gods prayed to the illustrious lord, Hari, in this way. O king! With the resplendence of one thousand suns rising simultaneously, he manifested himself before them. At this, the eyes of all the gods were suddenly dazzled. They were unable to see the directions, or their own selves, not to speak of the lord. With Sharva, [912] the illustrious Virinchi beheld his form. It sparkled like a dark emerald. [913] His eyes were red, like the inside of a lotus. His yellow silken garments were as bright as molten gold. All his limbs were beautiful and pleasant. His face was excellent and his eyebrows were handsome. His diadem had expensive gems and he was adorned with two armlets. His cheeks were illuminated by the dazzle of his earrings and his beautiful face was like a lotus. He was adorned with an ornamented girdle, bracelets, necklace and anklets. He wore the

Koustubha gem as an ornament and a garland of wild flowers, and Lakshmi added to the radiance. In their personified forms, Sudarshana and other weapons tended to him. With the large number of immortals and with Sharva, the foremost among the gods [914] prostrated his limbs on the ground and praised the supreme being.

'Brahma said, "O one without birth! Through your own maya, you are born, preserved and destroyed. [915] You transcend gunas. You are bliss, in the ocean of nirvana. You are smaller than an anu. Your powers are impossible to calculate. I bow down to you. O one whose glory is great! I bow down to you. O supreme Purusha! This beneficial form of yours is sought after by those who follow the Vedas, the *tantra*s and yoga. You are the one who creates and preserves the three worlds. O one with the universe in your form! We can perceive ourselves and everything in you. You are your own controller. In the beginning, everything existed in you. In the middle, everything exists in you. In the end, everything will exist in you. You are the beginning, the middle and the end of the universe. You are supreme and beyond everything, like the earth in a pot. [916] You resorted to your maya and everything emanated from you. You created the universe and also entered it. Those who are learned and knowledgeable are united with you and can perceive you in their minds. You create the transformation of the gunas, but you are not affected by the gunas. Fire can be extracted from kindling, milk from cattle, and food, water and a means of subsistence from the earth. In that way, using yoga, men can perceive you in their intelligence. Wise people know you in the gunas and speak about it. O protector! You have appeared before us in all your glory. O one with a navel like a lotus! This is what we have desired for a very long period of time. Having seen you today, all of us are delighted, like an elephant suffering from a forest conflagration is when it sees the waters of the Ganga. We, and all the guardians of the worlds, have sought refuge at your feet for a reason. Please satisfy us. O one who exists inside and outside! We have come to you. You are a witness to everything. What is there that you need to be informed about? I, Girisha, the gods and Daksha and the others are like sparks from a fire. [917] O lord!

Independent of you, what can we possibly understand? Instruct and counsel us about what is best for the gods and the brahmanas."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'Thus, Virinchi and the others worshipped him and he understood what was in their hearts. They stood there, their hands joined in salutation and with all their senses restrained. In a voice that rumbled like the clouds, he spoke to them. The lord of the gods was alone capable of accomplishing the task of the gods. However, he desired the pastime of the churning of the ocean and other allied activities. He spoke to them.

'The illustrious one said, "O Brahma! O Shambhu! O gods! Listen to the words I speak. Listen to how all of you gods can obtain the greatest benefit. The daityas and danavas are favoured by destiny. As long as that lasts and until it turns in your favour, it is recommended that you have an alliance with them. O gods! When a task is important, there should be an alliance even with enemies. For the sake of accomplishing an objective, one should behave like the snake with the mouse. [918] Without any delay, efforts should be made to extract amrita. After drinking it, a living being becomes immortal, even if he is devoured by death. Fling all the herbs, grass, creepers and plants into the ocean of milk. Using Mandara as a churning rod and Vasuki as the rope, churn it. O gods! With my help, churn it single-mindedly. The daityas will suffer the hardship, while you reap the fruits. O gods! You should accept whatever the asuras desire. No success can be achieved through anger, but everything is achieved through conciliation. The *kalakuta* poison will be generated from the ocean, but do not be scared of it. When objects of desire are produced, you should not be greedy. Nor should you be angry."' [919]

Shri-Shuka continued, 'O king! Having instructed the gods in this fashion, the illustrious Purushottama, the lord who easily follows his own path, vanished from their sight. Having bowed down to the illustrious one, the grandfather and Bhava returned to their own abodes. The gods went to Bali. The revered king of the daityas saw the enemy. Though his own leaders were agitated and uncontrolled, he restrained them. He knew about the time for alliances and the time for war. Virochana's son was on his seat, protected by the leaders among the asuras. Having conquered everything, he was

full of great prosperity. They approached him. The immensely intelligent and great Indra assured him with gentle words. Following everything that Purushottama had instructed, he addressed him. This appealed to the daitya,[920] the other lords of the asuras, Shambara, Arishtanemi and the residents of Tripura. Thus, the gods and the asuras had a fraternal alliance. O scorcher of enemies! For the sake of the amrita, they made supreme efforts. Those extremely indomitable ones used their energy to uproot Mount Mandara. Roaring loudly, they used their strong arms, which were like clubs, to convey it to the ocean. Because the distance was far and the burden heavy, Shakra, Virochana's son and the others were unable to bear it and, helpless, abandoned it along the path. When it fell down there, the golden mountain crushed many immortals and danavas under its weight. The illustrious one got to know that they were broken-hearted. Their arms, thighs and shoulders were broken. He arrived there, astride Garuda. He saw that the falling mountain had crushed the immortals and danavas. He glanced at them and they regained their lives. They became free of their anxiety and their wounds. As if he was playing, he raised the mountain with one hand and placed it atop Garuda. Ascending, and surrounded by large numbers of gods and asuras, he went to the ocean. Suparna, supreme among birds, took the mountain from his shoulder and placed it at the edge of the water. Hari then gave him leave to depart.'

Chapter 8(7)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Offering a share in the fruits, they invited Vasuki, the king of the nagas. Like a rope, they wound him around the mountain and were delighted. O extender of the Kuru lineage! For the sake of the amrita, the gods started to make efforts. Initially, Hari seized the front and the gods were also there. However, the lord of the daityas did not approve of what the great being sought to do. "We will not grasp the serpent's tail. That limb is inauspicious. We have studied and possess learning. Our birth and deeds are famous." Purushottama saw that the daityas stood silently. Smiling, he

let go off the front and with the immortals, seized the tail. Kashyapa's descendants divided it up in this way. For the sake of the amrita, they made great efforts to churn the ocean of milk. O descendant of the Pandu lineage! While the ocean was being churned, the heavy mountain had no support and sank into the water, despite being held by those powerful ones. Their minds were distressed. Their radiant faces faded. Despite their being strong, because of destiny, their manliness was destroyed. The lord saw that the lord of obstacles had created this impediment. However, his valour was indomitable and his intentions could not be countered. Therefore, he assumed the great and wonderful form of a tortoise. He entered the water and raised the mountain up. On seeing that the kulachala had again been raised up, the gods and the asuras resumed the churning. The back of the tortoise extended for one lakh yojanas and was like another giant dvipa. O dear one! Using the strength of their arms, the Indras among the gods and the asuras rotated the mountain on his back. That original and immeasurable tortoise bore this rotation and thought that someone was scratching his limbs. Vishnu entered them in different forms and enhanced their strength and energy—asura traits in asuras, encouragement in the large number of gods, and the divine form of ignorance in the Indra among the nagas. [921] Like another Indra among mountains, the thousand-armed one appeared on top of that king of mountains and grasped it with his hand. The gods, with Brahma and Indra at the forefront, praised him and showered down flowers on him. He supported it from above and below, and his supreme atman entered them and enthused them. Proud of their strength, they swiftly churned the ocean with the giant mountain and the large number of crocodiles was agitated.

'The Indra among serpents possessed one thousand hard eyes and mouths. Flames mixed with smoke emerged from his breath and robbed the lustre of asuras like Poulama, Kaleya, Bali, Ilvala and others. They were like sarala trees [922] burnt down in a forest conflagration. The lustre of the gods was also destroyed from the flames in the breath. Their garments, excellent garlands, jackets and faces were covered with smoke. However, controlled by the illustrious one, the clouds rained down sufficiently on them and the breeze blew fragrantly from the waves of the ocean. In this way, the

gods and the asuras did their best to churn the ocean. When amrita was not generated, the illustrious one began to churn himself. He was as dark as a cloud and wore golden garments. The earrings on his ears flashed like lightning. The wavy hair on his head glistened. Wearing garlands, his eyes were red. With triumphant arms that ensure fearlessness to the universe, he seized the dandashuka. Resembling another mountain, holding the mountain from above and below, he churned with the churning rod. Because of the churning, the great ocean was agitated and fish, makaras, snakes, tortoises, whales, sea elephants and *timingila*s [923] were terrified. An extremely virulent poison known as *halahala* was initially produced. O dear one! Terrible and intolerable in its force, it couldn't be controlled and spread in all the directions, upwards, downwards, whirling and curling around. Scared and unable to find protection, the terrified subjects sought refuge with Ishvara Sadashiva. They saw the supreme among the gods seated atop the mountain [924] with the goddess, performing austerities for the welfare of the three worlds. Desiring liberation, sages were worshipping him.

'They bowed down and prayed to him. The Prajapatis said, "O god of the gods! O Mahadeva! O one who is in the atmans of creatures! O creator of creatures! Save us. We have sought refuge with you. The poison is burning down the three worlds. You alone are the lord of the entire universe, of both bondage and emancipation. Accomplished ones worship you. You are the preceptor who delivers those who seek refuge. O lord! Through your own strength and full of gunas, you undertake creation, preservation and destruction. O lord who is a witness to everything! You assume the forms of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. You are the supreme and mysterious brahman. You are the cause of creation, the cause and the effect. You manifest many kinds of powers. You are the atman, the lord of the universe. You are the source of sound. You are the original cause of the universe. You are the atman. You are the breath of life and the senses. You are material objects and the gunas. You are innate nature. You are time, sacrifices, truth, truthfulness and dharma. It is said that you are the original sound with three aksharas. [925] The fire is your mouth. You are the atman of all the gods. The worlds know that the earth is your lotus feet. You are the progress of time. All the gods are in

your atman. The directions are your ears. The lord of the waters [926] is your tongue. The sky is your navel. The wind is your breath. The sun is your eyes. The water is your semen. Your atman is a refuge for all atmans, superior or inferior. The moon is your mind. O illustrious one! The firmament is your head. The oceans are your stomach. The mountains are your bones and their joints. All the herbs and plants are your body hair. The metres are directly your seven sheaths. [927] The three Vedas are in your atman. All dharma is in your heart. O lord! The five Upanishads are your faces and the thirty-eight categories of mantras emerge from these. [928] You are known as Shiva and are the essence of the paramatman. O god! You are established in your own self-illuminating state. Your shadow leads to the creation of different kinds of adharma. Your three eyes are sattva, rajas and tamas. Samkhya is your atman and the sacred texts emanated from your glance. O ancient rishi! O god! You are full of the Vedas. O lord of the mountains! You are the supreme radiance where sattva, rajas and tamas do not exist and where the guardians of the world, Virinchi, Vaikuntha and Indra of the gods cannot go. You are the brahman, where differentiation is non-existent. You are the one who destroyed Kama, the sacrifice, Tripura, the deadly poison and many others. [929] You destroy the bhutas who cause injury. However, we are not praising you because of that. At the time of destruction, you withdraw all this into your own atman. Sparks of fire emerge from your eyes and you burn everything down. We do not know how this happens. Those who find delight in their atmans and are teachers think of your feet in their hearts. They torment themselves through austerities and think of you roaming around in the dual, with Uma. They talk of you as a fierce being who is always in cremation grounds. Indeed, they are without shame and do not know you at all. You are beyond cause and effect and supreme of the supreme. O lord! Thus, it is not possible to comprehend your nature and powers. Brahma and the others cannot do it, how can we? We are only outcomes and creatures of his creation. To the best of our ability, we are praying to you. O Maheshvara! We cannot see the supreme and you are supreme of the supreme. Though your deeds are not manifest, you have manifested yourself for the welfare of the worlds.” He was compassionate and saw that

they were suffering and greatly afflicted. The god who was a well-wisher to all creatures spoke to his beloved Sati. Shiva said, "Alas! O Bhavani! Behold the calamity that confronts subjects. Because of the churning of the ocean of milk, a deadly poison [930] has arisen. It is recommended that I should grant those who seek to save their lives freedom from fear. This much is the objective of any master who wishes to protect the distressed. Virtuous people regard their own lives as fleeting and give those up to save beings. Confounded by his [931] maya, creatures are bound in this enmity. O fortunate one! If a person is compassionate, Hari is pleased in all his soul. O illustrious lady! If Hari is pleased, I and all mobile and immobile objects, are pleased. Therefore, I must consume this poison. Let me make it safe for the subjects." The illustrious creator of the universe thus took Bhavani's permission and knowing about his powers, she assented.

'He started to devour the poison. He picked up the halahala poison in his broad palm. Compassionate, the creator of all beings devoured it. The poison that was generated from the water exhibited its own strength. It made his throat blue and this became an ornament for the virtuous one. In general, virtuous people torment themselves by accepting the torments of the worlds. This is regarded as supreme worship of the Purusha who resides in all atmans. Witnessing the deed of Shambhu Midusha, [932] god of the gods, the subjects, Daksha's daughter, [933] Brahma and Vaikuntha praised him. As he was drinking it, a little bit of the poison trickled down from his palm. This was accepted by scorpions, poisonous snakes and plants and dandashukas.'

Chapter 8(8)

Shri-Shuka said, 'When the one who is seated on a bull drank up the poison, the immortals and the danavas were delighted. As they swiftly churned the ocean, the source of oblations appeared. [934] O king! The rishis who know about the brahman and perform agnihotra sacrifices accepted her. They did this to perform sacrifices for deva yana and for oblations and clari-

fied butter. After this, the horse named Ucchaishrava emerged. It was as white as the moon. Since Bali desired it, as he had been instructed by the lord, Indra did not wish for it. Airavata, Indra among elephants, emerged next. With its four tusks, it was more glorious than the white mountain the illustrious Hara resides in. [935] O king! After this, Airavana and the other eight diggajas were generated. [936] Two jewels known as Koustubha and Padmaraga were produced from the great ocean and Hari desired to wear those two jewels on his chest as ornaments. After this, Parijat, the ornament of the world of the gods, emerged. Just as you fulfil all desires on earth, it fulfils every kind of desire. Next, the apsaras came out. They wore golden ornaments and were clad in excellent garments. With their gentle gaits and glances, they delighted all the residents of heaven.

'After this emerged Rama, the embodiment of prosperity and supremely devoted to the illustrious one. She illuminated the directions with her beauty, like a flash of lightning atop Soudamani. [937] All the gods, asuras and humans desired her. Her beauty, grace, youth, complexion and greatness agitated their minds. The great Indra brought an extremely wonderful seat for her. Assuming embodied forms, the best among the rivers brought golden pots filled with pure water. The earth brought all the herbs required for her consecration. Cows brought the five sacred objects. [938] Spring brought the produce of the months of Chaitra and Vaishakha. Following the prescribed rites, the rishis performed all the rituals for consecration. The gandharvas sang auspicious songs and accomplished dancers danced and sang. The clouds produced the sounds from musical instruments like drums, kettledrums, smaller drums, trumpets, conch shells, flutes and veenas, producing loud notes. The goddess Shri was seated, with a lotus in her hand. To the sound of mantras pronounced by the brahmanas, the elephants in charge of the directions used full pots too bathe her. The ocean brought two yellow silken garments. Varuna brought the Vaijayanti garland, with bees intoxicated with honey buzzing around it. Prajapati Vishvakarma brought wonderful ornaments. Sarasvati gave a necklace. Aja [939] gave her a lotus. Nagas gave her earrings. While benedictions were being pronounced, she picked up a garland of blue lotuses, with bees buzzing around it, in her hand. Her beau-

tiful face and cheeks were illuminated by the earrings. Her bashful smile enhanced her excellent beauty. Her symmetrical breasts touched each other and were smeared with sandalwood and kunkuma. Her stomach was flat. She started to walk and her movement was like that of a golden creeper, with the sounds of her anklets jingling. She was faultless herself and looked around among the gandharvas, the Siddhas, the asuras, the yakshas, the charanas and the residents of heaven for an abode that permanently possessed all the virtuous qualities. But she couldn't find one. "Indeed there are those with austerities, but they have not conquered their anger. [940] Some possess knowledge, but they are not devoid of attachment. Some are great, but have not conquered desire. Even a lord depends on someone else as a refuge. There are some with dharma, but they are not fraternal towards beings. Some have renounced, but that is not reason enough for emancipation. There are those with valour, but they have not been able to cast aside the force of time. There are those without attachment to the gunas, but they do not want a second. [941] Some possess long lifespans, but do not possess good and virtuous conduct. For those who have good conduct, their lifespans are not known. There are some with both, [942] but they are not auspicious. Someone who is extremely auspicious does not desire me." Having thought about all the virtuous qualities in this way, Rama accepted Mukunda as her groom, though he was indifferent about desiring her. He possessed all the desired qualities. He was supreme and depended on himself alone. Indeed, he transcended all the desired qualities. She approached him with the garland made out of freshly blooming lotuses, with bees intoxicated with honey buzzing around it, and placed it around his shoulders. Smiling bashfully and with shining eyes, she indicated her place on his bosom. The supreme divinity, the father of the three worlds, made an abode for Shri, the mother of prosperity, on his chest. Stationed there, with her own compassionate glances, Shri increases the welfare of the lords of the three worlds. The followers of the gods, [943] along with their wives, sang and danced, loudly playing on musical instruments like conch shells, trumpets and drums. Chanting mantras and worshipping the illustrious one, Brahma, Rudra, Angiras and all the lords who were creators of the worlds showered down flowers. Shri

glanced at the gods, the Prajapatis and the subjects and they obtained all the qualities and good conduct, becoming greatly content.

'O king! However, the daityas and the danavas were neglected by Lakshmi. Dispirited and greedy, they lost their enterprise and became shameless. The goddess Varuni [944] appeared in the form of a lotus-eyed maiden. With Hari's permission, the asuras accepted her.

'After this, Kashyapa's descendants continued to churn the ocean, desiring amrita. O great king! An extremely wonderful being arose. His arms were long and thick. His neck was like a conch shell. His eyes were red. His complexion was dark and he was young. He wore a garland and was adorned with all the ornaments. His garments were yellow and his chest was broad. His earrings were polished and were made out of jewels. His soft hair was curled and was beautiful at the tips. The extremely fortunate one was like a lion in his valour. In hands decorated with bracelets, he held a pot filled with amrita. He was born from a portion of the illustrious Vishnu himself. He was known as Dhanvantari and he is the originator of *ayurveda*. He has a share in sacrifices. All the asuras saw that he was holding a pot filled with amrita. Desiring the pot and its contents, they seized it. The asuras took away the pot, filled with amrita. The gods were distressed in their minds and went to Hari for refuge. The illustrious one satisfies the desires of his servants and saw that they were distressed. "Do not unnecessarily be dejected. I will use my maya to accomplish your purpose." O lord! For the sake of the amrita, dissension was created in their minds. "I will be first. You won't be the first. I am first, not you." The gods also sought to obtain their own shares. "In a sacrifice, everyone has an equal share. That is eternal dharma." O king! The daityas were filled with intolerance and tried to prevent their own. The weak ones repeatedly protested to the strong ones, who had seized the pot. Vishnu is the lord who knows about all the different techniques. Meanwhile, he assumed the form of an extremely wonderful woman, impossible to describe. She was dark to behold, like a blue lotus. All her limbs were beautiful. Her symmetrical ears were adorned with earrings. Her cheeks, nose and face were beautiful. She was in the bloom of youth, with heavy and round breasts. Her waist was slender. Her face at-

tracted delighted buzzing bees and her eyes were anxious. Her mass of excellent hair dazzled and a garland of mallika flowers was entwined in it. Her shapely neck had a necklace and her beautiful arms were adorned with armlets. Her hips were like an island and a sparkling garment was spread across them, with a girdle adorning it. As she moved, there was the enchanting sound of anklets. She arched her eyebrows and modestly smiled at the leading daityas, glancing at them repeatedly, igniting desire in them.'

Chapter 8(9)

Shri-Shuka said, 'The asuras had given up all affection towards each other and were trying to seize the vessel, snatching it from others. They had adopted the dharma of bandits. They saw the woman advancing. "Her beauty is wonderful. Her body is wonderful. Her blooming youth is wonderful." Filled with desire, they rushed towards her and started to ask. "You possess eyes like the petals of a lotus. Who are you? Where have you come from? What do you wish for? O one with the beautiful thighs! Whom do you belong to? You are churning our minds. We know that we, immortals, daityas, Siddhas, gandharvas, charanas and lords of the worlds have not touched you, or seen anyone like you, not to speak of men. O one with the excellent eyebrows! It is certain that destiny has sent you for embodied beings. Haven't you been fashioned to take pity and delight our senses and minds? O beautiful one! O one with the excellent waist! Because of this one object, [945] we are challenging each other and relatives are bound in enmity. You should resolve this. Because we are descended from Kashyapa, we are brothers and have demonstrated our manliness. You should divide it properly, so that there is no dispute." Hari, who had used maya to assume the form of a woman, was thus invited by the daityas. The one with the beautiful limbs smiled. She looked towards them and spoke. The illustrious one said, "How can Kashyapa's descendants be attracted to a pumshchali [946] like me? A learned person never trusts a woman. O enemies of the gods! It has been said that the friendship of wolves and svairini women [947] is temporary. They

are always searching for new friends." Teasing in this way, she assured the minds of the asuras, though her intent was serious. They laughed and handed over the vessel of amrita to her. Having accepted the vessel of amrita, Hari smiled pleasantly and addressed them in these words. "If you accept whatever I do, good or bad, I will apportion the share of the amrita." The bulls among the asuras heard her words. They did not discern the import and agreed.

'They fasted, bathed and offered oblations into the fire. [948] They donated to cows, [949] brahmanas and other beings, and brahmanas pronounced benedictions. As they chose, they attired themselves in excellent garments and adorned themselves with ornaments. All of them seated themselves on kusha grass, with the blades pointing to the east. O Indra among men! The gods and Diti's descendants sat down, facing the east. The hall was fragrant with incense, with garlands and lamps. She entered, holding the pot in her hand. Her thighs were like an elephant's trunk. Because of her heavy hips, covered in a silk garment, her movement was slow. Her eyes were intoxicated. Her golden anklets tinkled. Her breasts were like pitchers. Adorned in beautiful golden earrings, she was like Shri's companion. Her nose, cheeks and face were superior to those of the gods. She glanced at them and smiled repeatedly. The end of the garment slipped, revealing her breasts. The gods and asuras were captivated. Asuras are unruly and violent by nature. Thinking that giving them amrita would be like giving it to snakes, Achyuta did not give them a share. The lord of the universe made the two categories [950] sit in separate rows, each sat down in his respective seat in his respective row. She took the pot and went to the daityas, deceiving them with sweet words. She then fed the amrita, which destroys old age and death, to those who were seated further away. [951] O king! The asuras adhered to the pledge they had themselves given. Because of their affection towards her and because they did not want to fight with a woman, they remained quiet. They had developed great love for her and did not wish that love to be destroyed. They also held her in great respect and did not wish to say anything unpleasant. Disguising himself with the signs of a god, Svarbhanu entered the ranks of the gods and drank the amrita. [952] However, the

sun god and the moon god pointed this out. As he was drinking, with his razor-sharp chakra, Hari sliced off his head. Since the torso had not been touched by the amrita, it fell down, dead. The head became immortal and Aja [953] conferred the status of a planet on him. Because of the enmity, on the days of the new moon and the full moon, he attacks the sun and the moon. When the gods had almost finished drinking the amrita, the illustrious Hari, the creator of the worlds, assumed his own form, while the Indras among the asuras looked on. Thus the time, the place, the reason, the objective, the effort and the intention of the large number of gods and asuras was identical, but the fruits were different. Because they sought refuge with the dust on his lotus feet, the large number of gods obtained the fruit of amrita, but the daityas did not. For the protection of one's own physical body and that of the offspring, men do many things with their wealth, deeds, thoughts and words. However, since these stem from differentiation, [954] these are temporary. That which is done without a sense of differentiation is alone permanent. Like watering the root, everything then becomes successful.'

Chapter 8(10)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O king! Thus, the danavas and the daityas did not get amrita. Though they tried to make the efforts, they had turned their faces away from Vasudeva. O king! After accomplishing the task of obtaining amrita and feeding it to those on his side, the gods, while all the creatures looked one, the one with Garuda as his mount left. Diti's descendants saw the supreme prosperity of their rivals. They could not tolerate this. Raising their weapons, they attacked the gods. All the large number of gods were energized from drinking the amrita. Having sought refuge with Narayana's feet, they used their weapons to fight back. There was an extremely terrible encounter known as the *devasura* battle. O king! That tumultuous encounter occurred on the shores of the ocean and it made the body hair stand up. With intolerant minds, the rivals attacked each other in the battle. They clashed and tried to kill each other with swords, arrows and many kinds of

weapons. There was a loud sound of conch shells, trumpets, drums, tambourines, smaller drums and kettledrums. There was the sound of elephants, horses, chariots and infantry and it was tumultuous. Chariots clashed against chariots there, foot soldiers against foot soldiers and elephants against elephants. Some fought astride camels, others astride elephants. Some were astride donkeys, others astride white-faced bears, tigers or monkeys. Some were on the backs of kites, vultures and cranes, with others on hawks and cocks. [955] Some were on timingilas and sharabhas, others on buffaloes, rhinos, cows, bulls, *gavaya*s and *aruna*s. [956] Some were astride jackals, rats, lizards, rabbits and men. Others were on goats, sheep, black antelopes, swans and pigs. There were some on creatures that moved on land and in water, others on creatures with deformed shapes. O king! Those two armies penetrated deeper and deeper into each other. O king! There were colourful flags and canopies and white and sparkling umbrellas, with extremely expensive handles studded with diamonds. There were fans made out of peacock feathers and whisks made out of yak hair. The upper and lower garments were stirred by the wind and the polished armour and ornaments glittered. The sharp weapons dazzled, sparkling in the sun's rays. O descendant of the Pandu lineage! The valiant gods and the danavas possessed their own standards. The brave ones were adorned with garlands. The two armies resembled two oceans.

'In the battle, the commander of the army of the asuras was Bali, Virochana's son. His vehicle was known as Vaihasaya. It had been made by Maya and could travel as it willed. It was filled with all the required implements. O lord! It was extraordinary in every respect. It could not be described and its movement could not be determined. It was sometimes visible and sometimes invisible. He was astride that excellent vimana, surrounded by all the generals of his army. With the best of fans, whisks and an umbrella, he was as radiant as the rising moon. On all his sides, on their respective vehicles, were the leaders of the asura hordes—Namuchi, Shambara, Bana, Viprachitti, Ayomukha, Dvi-murdha, Kalanabha, Praheti, Heti, Ilvala, Shakuni, Bhuta-santapa, Vajra-damshtra, Virochana, Hayagriva, Shanku-shira, Kapila, Megha-dundubhi, Taraka, Chakradrik, Shumbha,

Nishumbha, Jambha, Utkala, Arishta, Arishtanemi, Maya, the lord of Tripura and others like the Poulamas, Kaleyas and Nivatakavachas. They had not obtained a share of the soma. They had only obtained a share of the hardships. Earlier, in the field of battle, they had vanquished many immortals. They roared like lions and blew loudly on their conch shells. On seeing his enemies, the destroyer of Bala [957] became extremely angry. His own ruler, he was resplendent astride the diggaja Airavata. The lord was as radiant as the sun rising from behind Mount Udaya, where there are flows from waterfalls. Everywhere around him, there were gods on many kinds of vehicles, with different standards and weapons. The guardians of the world, Vayu, Agni, Varuna and the others were there, along with their followers. They approached each other and abused each other with words that struck at the inner organs. Having entered the forefront of the battle, those warriors challenged each other to fight in duels. O king! Bali fought with Indra, Taraka with Guha, Varuna fought with Heti and Mitra with Praheti, Yama with Kalanabha and Vishvakarma with Maya. Shambara fought with Tvashta and Savitra with Virochana. Namuchi fought against Aparajita, the two Ashvins against Vrishaparva and the god Surya against Bali's one hundred sons, of whom, Bana was the eldest. Rahu fought with Soma and Puloma with Anila. The spirited goddess, Bhadrakali, fought against Nishumbha and Shumbha. O destroyer of enemies! Vrishakapi fought with Jambha, Vibhavasu with Mahisha and Ilvala and Vatapi with Brahma's sons. Durmarsha fought with Kamadeva, Utkala with the Matrikas, Brihaspati with Ushanas and Shanaishchara with Naraka. The Maruts fought with the Nivatakavachas, the Kaleyas with the immortal Vasus, the Vishvadevas with the Poulamas and the Rudras with the Krodhavashas. In this way, in the field of battle, the asuras and the gods mingled and fought against each other in duels. They approached and struck with great energy. Striving for victory, they used sharp arrows, swords and spears. They used bhushundis, chakras, clubs, double-edged swords, battleaxes, javelins, blazing torches, darts, axes, swords, long swords, maces, bludgeons and catapults to sever heads. Elephants, horses, chariots, many kinds of mounts and riders and foot soldiers were struck down. Arms, thighs, necks and legs were severed.

Standards, bows, armour and ornaments were shattered. With feet and wheels of chariots striking against the ground, particles of dust arose from the field of battle. This enveloped the directions, the sky and the firmament. Whirling around and sprinkled with blood, this dust settled down on the ground. The earth was strewn with heads, severed diadems and earrings, eyes that still gazed in rage, teeth biting the lips in anger, garments, giant arms with ornaments and weapons, and thighs that were like the trunks of elephants. The headless torsos of soldiers seemed to see with the eyes in their fallen heads. Indomitable, they suddenly rose up and seizing weapons in their arms, rushed forward and attacked.

'Bali struck the great Indra with ten arrows and Airavata with three. He used four arrows to strike the four guarding the flanks and one to strike the driver. However, Shakra, dexterous in his valour, seemed to smile. While they were still descending, he used four sharp and broad-headed arrows to sever them. The intolerant one witnessed his excellent deed and seized a spear that blazed like a giant meteor. However, Hari [958] severed it, while it was still in his hands. The lord severed all the weapons that he [959] seized and hurled at him, trident, javelin, club and double-edged sword. At this, the asura created the maya of asuras and vanished. O lord! A mountain appeared above the soldiers of the gods. From this, trees blazing in a forest conflagration fell down. There were boulders with spiked stones and these crushed the enemy's army. Giant serpents, dandashukas, scorpions, lions, tigers, boars and giant elephants descended, crushing them. O lord! There were hundreds of naked and female yatudhanas, with tridents in their hands. Shouting "Sever", "Strike", they manifested themselves, along with large numbers of rakshasas. Large clouds, rumbling in harsh and deep tone, appeared in the sky. Borne along by stormy winds, these thundered and showered down burning coals. With the wind as a charioteer, the daitya created an extremely large fire. It was like the *samvartaka* fire [960] and burnt down the soldiers of the gods. In every direction, the ocean was seen to turn turbulent. There were tremendous storms and terrible waves, whirlpools and eddies. Invisible in the battle, the daityas created such enormous maya. When they created this maya, the soldiers of the gods became despondent.

O king! Unable to counter and understand this, Indra and the others meditated on the illustrious one and the creator of the universe manifested himself there. His tender feet were placed atop Suparna. His garments were yellow and his eyes were like freshly bloomed lotuses. With the eight weapons in his hands, he manifested himself there. The shrivatsa mark and Koustubha were on his chest and he wore an expensive diadem and earrings. The asuras were mysterious in their deeds. But as soon as he entered, their great maya was destroyed by his greater glory. It was like a dream vanishing when one awakes. Hari's memory frees from all kinds of calamities. Kalanemi had a lion as his mount. In the battle, when he saw the one whose mount was Garuda, he whirled his giant javelin and flung it. O king! As if playing, with his feet on Garuda's head, the lord of the gods seized it while it was descending and used it to kill the enemy and his mount. He used his chakra to sever the heads of the extremely strong Mali and Sumali. At this, Malyavan seized a sharp club to attack the one born from an egg. [961] However, the original being used the chakra to sever the head of the enemy who was roaring loudly.'

Chapter 8(11)

Shri-Shuka said, 'After this, because of the supreme being, supreme in his compassion, the gods regained their senses. Shakra, Vayu and the others strongly attacked those by whom they had been routed in the battle earlier. The illustrious chastiser of Paka was enraged at Virochana's son. [962] He seized the vajra in his hand and the subjects shrieked, "Alas! Alas!" [963] In the great battle, the spirited and extremely accomplished one was roaming around, in front of him. The one with the vajra in his hand reprimanded him in this way. "O foolish one! O lord of maya! You are like a magician who uses conjuring tricks, though you wish to vanquish us. Such a magician can only deceive the eyes of children and take away their riches. There are those who use maya and wish to ascend to the celestial regions. But I drive away such ignorant bandits and make them fall down from the status they

formerly occupied. You use wicked maya. O evil one! Try with all your relatives. I will now use this vajra, with one hundred edges, to sever your head." Bali replied, "For those engaged in a battle, their deeds are urged by destiny. In course of time, fame, victory, defeat and death come to everyone. Wise ones witness the progress of time in the universe. They are neither delighted, nor distressed. Therefore, those like you are not learned. We do not consider ourselves to be the cause. Even though your words strike at the inner organs, we do not accept them as virtuous or reason for grief." Having said this, the brave lord, the crusher of heroes, used iron arrows. Drawing his bow back up to his ears, he used these to again strike the one who had struck with words. Thus, the god was countered by the enemy who spoke the truth. However, like an elephant struck with a goad, he could not tolerate these words. The destroyer of enemies struck him with the invincible vajra. Along with his vehicle, he fell down on the ground, like a mountain whose wings had been severed. [964] Jambha, Bali's friend and well-wisher, saw that he had fallen down in the battle. Performing a friendly act, he attacked the one who had struck his friend. His mount was a lion and he raised a club with great force. The extremely strong one struck Shakra on the neck with this and also struck his elephant. Severely struck by the club, the elephant was pained and distracted. Filled with great lassitude, it sank down on its knees and touched the ground. At this, Matali brought the chariot, drawn by one thousand tawny horses. When this was brought, the lord abandoned the elephant and ascended the chariot. In the battle, the supreme among danavas honoured his deed. But smiling, he struck him with a blazing trident. [965] The blow was extremely difficult to withstand. However, Matali resorted to his fortitude. Enraged, Indra used his vajra to sever Jambha's head from his body. Hearing from rishi Narada that Jambha had been killed, his relatives, Namuchi, Bala and Paka swiftly arrived at the spot. They used harsh words to pierce Indra's inner organs. In the battle, they covered him with arrows, like a cloud showering down on a mountain. Demonstrating the dexterity of his hands, Bala simultaneously struck Hari's [966] one thousand tawny horses with one thousand arrows. Paka struck Matali with two hundred arrows. He skilfully affixed and released them

separately, directing one hundred at the charioteer and one hundred at the chariot. In the battle, this was extremely wonderful. Namuchi used fifteen large and gold-tufted arrows to strike him [967] in the battle and roared like a cloud filled with rain. From every direction, the asuras shrouded Shakra, his chariot and his charioteer with a dense mass of arrows, like the sun being enveloped with clouds during the rainy season. The large number of gods, and their companions, could not see him in the battle and, distracted, started to lament. Without a leader, they were vanquished by the enemy's strength. They were like traders in an ocean, when their boat has been shattered. However, with his horses, chariot, standard and charioteer, Turasaha [968] emerged from that cage made out of arrows. Like the sun at the end of the night, he used his own energy to illuminate and delight the directions, the sky and earth. He saw that the army of the gods was afflicted by the enemy in the battle. Enraged, the wielder of the vajra seized the vajra, so that the enemy might be killed. O king! While their relatives looked on, he used that vajra, sharp on eight sides, to sever the heads of Bala and Paka. This terrified people.

'On seeing that they had been killed, Namuchi was filled with grief, intolerance and rage. O lord of men! He made great efforts to kill Indra. He angrily seized a trident made out of iron in his hand. It possessed bells and was ornamented with gold. Roaring like a lion, he powerfully released it towards the king of the gods, exclaiming, "You have been killed." With great speed, it descended from the sky towards the ground. However, Hari used arrows to shatter it into one thousand fragments. O king! Angry, to sever his head, the lord of the gods then used the vajra to strike him on the neck. However, though it had been hurled with force, with the energy of the lord of the gods, the vajra could not pierce his skin. This was supremely extraordinary. It had been able to strike the valiant Vritra. However, it was now repulsed by the skin on Namuchi's neck. When the vajra was repulsed by the enemy in this way, Indra was scared. He wondered whether this, confusing to the worlds, had occurred because of some act of destiny. "Earlier, mountains possessed wings and used these wings to descend anywhere on earth, creating a destruction of subjects. Therefore, I used this to sever their

wings. This is filled with the essence of Tvashta's austerities. Vritra was brought down with this and so were many other powerful ones, even those whose skins could not be pierced by all kinds of weapons. I released this vajra at an insignificant asura and he has repulsed it. Therefore, without the energy of the brahmana, [969] this has become a useless staff and I will no longer hold it." While Shakra was lamenting in this way, an invisible voice spoke. "This danava cannot be killed with anything that is wet or dry. I gave him a boon that he would not be killed by anything wet or dry. O Maghavan! Therefore, you must search for some other means to slay the enemy." Hearing this divine voice, Maghavan controlled himself. He meditated and discerned that foam would be the means, since it was neither wet, nor dry. It was not wet or dry and with it, he severed Namuchi's head. The lord was praised by a large number of sages and they showered down garlands on him. The two foremost gandharvas, Vishvavasu and Puravasu, sang. The drums of the gods were sounded. Dancers danced in joy. Just as lions kill deer, in duels, Vayu, Agni, Varuna and other gods used their force to kill the enemy asuras. O king! When he saw that the gods would destroy all the danavas, the god Brahma sent devarshi Narada to restrain them. Narada said, "Seeking refuge in Narayana's arms, you have obtained the amrita. Shri has shown you her favours. Therefore, stop this hostility." Honouring the sage's words, they restrained their rage and intolerance. Praised by their followers, all of them returned to heaven. Those who remained in the battle [970] took Narada's permission and conveyed the incapacitated Bali to Mount Asta. His limbs were not missing and his head was still in its place. Using his own knowledge of *samjivani*, [971] Ushanas brought him back to life. Touched by Ushanas, Bali regained his senses and his memory. Though he had been defeated, since he was accomplished at discerning the truth, he did not lament.'

Chapter 8(12)

Badarayana's son said, 'Vrishadhvaja [972] heard that Hari had assumed the form of a woman to confound the danavas and feed soma to the large number of gods. Girisha ascended the bull. Along with the goddess and surrounded by a large number of bhutas, he went to the place where Madhusudana was, to see him. The illustrious one welcomed Bhava, along with Uma, respectfully and affectionately. When he was seated, he honoured Hari back, smiled and spoke to him. Mahadeva said, "O god of the gods! O one who pervades the universe! O one whose body is the universe! O lord of every kind of sentiment! You are the atman, the cause and the lord. You are the beginning and the end. You are the middle. There is nothing other than you. You are inside and outside. Unlike these, you are without decay. You are truth. You are the brahman. You are consciousness. There are sages who crave after nothing. They give up attachment to both. [973] Desiring their benefit, they serve at your feet. You are the brahman. You are complete. You are amrita. You are without gunas. You are without sorrow. You are bliss alone. You are without transformation. There is no one other than you and you are distinct from everything. You are the cause behind the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe. You are the controller and lord of atmans. Everything looks towards you, but you do not look towards anything. You are alone. You are the cause and the effect. You are duality and non-duality. There is no material difference between gold that has been polished and gold in the form of ore. Like that, because of ignorance, people impose differences on you. That is because of transformation in the gunas, but you are not affected by these. Some regard you as the brahman. Others say that you alone are dharma. Some say that you transcend cause and effect, others that you are Purusha, the lord who transcends everything. Some describe you as being endowed with nine powers. [974] Some say that you are supreme, others that you are the great Purusha. You are without decay and are your own controller. We have been created from sattva. However, I, Parayu, [975] and the rishis, with Marichi as the foremost, do not truly know your creation. O lord! How can daityas, mortals and others who are always wicked in conduct? [976] Their intelligence is bewildered by your maya. You

have created everything, creation, preservation and destruction of the universe, the welfare of beings and their liberation from the cycle of birth and death. Just as the wind enters the sky and every mobile and immobile object, you are in all atmans. Everything is known to you. You pervade everything. I have seen your avataras and your pastimes with the gunas. I wish to see the form of a woman that you assumed, the one you used to confound the daityas and make the gods drink amrita. We have come to see that. We are extremely curious." The illustrious Vishnu was thus asked by the one who wields a trident in his hand. He laughed in a deep voice and replied to Girisha. The illustrious one said, "To bewilder the daityas, I assumed the form of a woman, since they had left with the vessel of amrita and I saw that I had to accomplish the task of the gods. O supreme among gods! Since you wish to see it, I will display it to you. It is extremely endearing to those who are addicted to desire and causes them to be aroused." Having said this, the illustrious one vanished from the spot. Bhava remained there with Uma, casting his eyes around in every direction.

'There was a grove with colourful flowers and pink foliage in the midst of the trees. He saw a beautiful woman there. She was sporting and playing with a ball. A shining silk garment was around her hips, with a girdle on it. As she leapt up and down, her breasts bounced. She wore excellent necklaces. At every step, she seemed to break in the middle because of the heavy burden. [977] She moved around here and there, on feet that seemed to be made out of coral. [978] As the ball moved in different directions, her large eyes and dilated pupils followed it, as if agitated. There were radiant earrings on her ears and they illuminated her shining cheeks. Her face was adorned with a dark mass of glossy hair. She used her right hand to play with the ball and used her beautiful left hand to tighten the garment that came loose and fix her dishevelled hair. She bemused the universe with her own maya. The god looked at her, playing with the ball. She cast sidelong glances at him and there was the bashful trace of a smile. As he looked at her and she looked back at him, his mind was agitated. He no longer knew himself, nor Uma and his own companions who were with him. When the ball was dislodged from her hand and moved away, she followed it. While

the woman was doing this, the wind stole her light garment and the string of the girdle. Even then, the god Bhava continued to gaze. Her beautiful limbs were enchanting and worth looking at. Having seen this, Bhava thought that she was also attracted to him. Desire agitated him and deprived him of his sense and good behaviour. Though Bhavani was looking, he lost his shame and approached her. She was naked. On seeing that he was approaching, she became extremely ashamed. Though she continued to smile, she did not remain there, but hid herself amidst the trees. With his senses agitated, the illustrious Bhava followed her. He was under the subjugation of desire, like the leader of an elephant herd towards a female elephant. He followed the woman with great speed and seized her by the hair. Though she did not wish it, he embraced her in his arms. She was embraced by the illustrious one, like a female elephant by a male elephant. With her hair dishevelled, she writhed around. O dear one! She freed herself from the embrace of the bull among the gods. Though her hips were heavy, she fled. After all, she was a maya fashioned by the divinity. Rudra followed the footsteps of Vishnu, extraordinary in his deeds. Driven by desire, as if vanquished by an enemy, he followed. While he followed her, his semen, invincible in its potency, oozed out, like the crazy leader of a herd, when it follows a woman it desires. O lord of the earth! Wherever the great-souled one's semen fell on earth, fields of gold and silver ore were created there. Hara followed her to rivers, lakes, mountains, forests, groves and places where rishis were assembled. When all the semen had been secreted, he saw that he had been benumbed by the god's maya. O best among kings! He restrained himself from the delusion.

'He himself understood the greatness of the one who is the atman of the universe. Thinking of his [979] incomprehensible valour, he did not think that this was at all extraordinary. Madhusudana saw that he was not disturbed or ashamed. Extremely pleased, he assumed a male form and spoke the following. The illustrious one said, "O best among the gods! It is good fortune that you have regained your stable state. O dear one! This is despite my having deluded you in the form of a woman, using my maya. Having been ensnared in my maya, which man other than you is capable of freeing him-

self from it? For those who are not in control of themselves and their sentiments, this is extremely difficult to overcome. This maya, full of gunas, will never bewilder you again. I unite it with time and assuming the form of time, it has many different components." O king! In this way, the illustrious one was honoured by the one with the shrivatsa mark. Having taken his permission, he [980] circumambulated him and left for his own abode, with his followers. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Delighted, the illustrious Bhava spoke to Bhavani about the maya, revered by the best of rishis as being created as a part of the atman's portion. "Have you witnessed the maya of Aja, the supreme Purusha, who is superior to all the divinities? I am one of his prominent portions. Yet, I was brought under his control, lost my independence and was confounded. What can be said of others? I performed yoga for one thousand years. At the end of that, you came and asked me about him. He is himself the ancient Purusha. He is not affected by time. Nor can one understand him." O son! I have told you about the valour of the one who wields the Sharnga bow. For the sake of the churning of the ocean, he bore the great mountain on his back. If one repeatedly chants about his deeds and listens to them, one's efforts never fail. A description of Uttamashloka's qualities removes all the exhaustion of samsara. His lotus feet are understood by devotees, not by those attached to wicked objects. Amrita was produced from the churning of the ocean and he only fed it to the noble immortals. Disguising himself as a young maiden, he confounded the enemies of the gods. He satisfies the desires of all those who resort to him. I bow down before him.'

Chapter 8(13)

Shri-Shuka said, 'The Manu known as Shraddhadeva was descended from Vivasvat. That is the seventh, [981] current now. Hear about his offspring. His sons are Ikshvaku, Nabhaga, Dhrishta, Sharyati, Narishyanta and Nabhaga. [982] The seventh is said to be Dishta. There are Karusha and Prishadhra and the tenth is known as Vasuman. O scorcher of enemies! These are the ten

sons of Vaivasvata Manu. O king! The gods are the Adityas, the Vasus, the Rudras, the Vishvadevas, the Maruts, the Ashvins and the Ribhus. Their Indra is Purandara. Kashyapa, Atri, Vasishtha, Vishvamitra, Goutama, Jamadagni and Bharadvaja are said to be the saptarshis. The illustrious one took birth as the son of Kashyapa and Aditi. Vishnu was the youngest of the Adityas and he assumed the form of vamana. I have briefly described seven manvantaras to you. I will now tell you about the future ones, each associated with Vishnu's powers. Vivasvat had two wives and both were Vishvakarma's daughters. O Indra among kings! They were Samjna and Chhaya and I have told you about them before. [983] It is said that there was a third named Vadava. Samjna had three offspring—Yama, Yami and Shraddhadeva. Now hear about Chhaya's offspring. There was a son named Savarni and a daughter named Tapati, who became Samvarana's wife. Shanaishchara was the third. The two Ashvins were Vadava's sons. O king! When the eighth manvantara arrives, Savarni will be the Manu. Nirmoka, Virajaska and others will be his sons. At that time, the gods will be the Sutapasas, the Virajas and the Amritaprabhas. Bali, Virochana's son, will be the Indra among them. When Vishnu asked for what could be covered in three strides, he gave him everything. Thus giving it up, he will obtain success and the status of Indra. The illustrious one bound him and happily instated him in Sutala again. He is like the king of heaven there. He has been instated there, in a place that is superior to heaven. O king! At that time, Galava, Diptiman, Rama, [984] Drona's son, Kripa, Rishyashringa and our father, the illustrious Badarayana, will be the saptarshis, as a result of their own yoga. At the moment, they are all in their respective hermitages. Through Devaguhya and Sarasvati, the lord will be born as Sarvabhouma. The lord will take away Purandara's position and confer it on Bali. O king! The ninth Manu, Daksha-savarni, will be born through Varuna. Bhutaketu, Diptaketu and others will be his sons. Paras, Marichigarbhas and others will be the gods. It is said that Adbhuta will be the Indra. The foremost among the rishis will be Dyutimat. Through Ayushmat and Ambudhara, the illustrious one's portion will be born as Rishabha. He will make Adbhuta enjoy the prosperity of the three worlds. The tenth Manu will be Brahma-savarni, the son of Upashlo-

ka. His sons will be Bhurishena and others. Among the brahmanas, Havishmat will be the chief. Havishmat, Sukrita, Satya, Jaya, Murti and others will be the brahmanas. [985] The gods will be Suvasana, Viruddha and others. Shambhu will be the lord of the gods. [986] As his own portion, the illustrious lord will be born as the son of Vishvasrija, through Vishuchi. He will be known as Vishvaksena and he will be Shambhu's friend. The eleventh Manu will be Dharma-savarni and he will be in control of his atman. In future, he will have ten sons, Satyadharma and others. The gods will be Vihangamas, Kamagamas and Nirvanaruchis. The Indra will be Vaidhriti and the rishis will be Aruna and others. Aryaka's son, born as Hari's portion through Vaidhrita, will be known as Dharmasetu. [987] He will sustain the three worlds. O king! The twelfth Manu will be Rudra-savarni. His sons will be Devavan, Upadeva, Devashreshtha and others. Ritadhama will be the Indra and Harita and others will be the gods. The rishis will be Tapomurti, Tapasvi, Agnidhraka and others. During the rule of that Manu and that manvantara, Hari's portion will be born as the lord Svadhama, the son of Satyasahasa and Sunrita. The thirteenth Manu will be Deva-savarni and he will know about his atman. Deva-savarni's sons will be Chitrasena, Vichitra and others. The gods will be Sukarma, Sutrama and Samja, while Divaspati will be the Indra. At that time, the rishis will be Nirmoka, Tattvadarshi and others. A portion of Hari, the lord of yoga, will be born as Devahotra's son, through his wife, Brihati. He will bestow everything on Divaspati. The fourteenth Manu will be Indra-savarni. Indra-savarni's sons will be Uru, Gambhira, Budha and others. The gods will be the Pavitras and Chakshushas, while Shuchi will be the Indra. The ascetics [988] will be Agnibahu, Shuchi, Shuddha, Magadha and others. O great king! Hari will be born as Brihadbhanu, the son of Satrayana and Vitana. He will undertake all the rites. O king! These fourteen cover the past, the present and the future and have been described. They amount to one kalpa, consisting of one thousand yugas.'

Chapter 8(14)

The king asked, 'O illustrious one! Who determines the tasks of the Manus in these manvantaras? Who engages them? Tell me that.'

The rishi replied, 'O lord of the earth! Manus, sons of Manus, the sages, Indras and the large number of gods—all of them are under the supreme being's control. O king! I have described the forms Purusha takes, Yajna and the others. The controller of the universe invokes the Manus and others, and controls them. At the end of the four yugas, the shrutis and other texts are devoured by time. Through their austerities, the rishis know that eternal dharma can no longer be seen. O king! Urged by Hari and thus engaged, during their own respective periods, the Manus establish dharma's four feet again. Until the end of their periods, these protectors of subjects divide the shares of sacrifices. The gods also obtain their shares and perform the same tasks. Bestowed by the illustrious one, Indra obtains the prosperity of the three worlds. He protects the three worlds and, as desired, showers down. According to the yuga, Hari assumes the forms of Siddhas, forms of rishis and forms of lords of yoga, to expound the paths of jnana, karma and yoga. He creates in the form of Prajapatis. In the form of the king, he slays bandits. In the form of time, with different qualities, he destroys everything. Because of his maya, people praise him in different names and forms. They are confounded by their insolent belief in different schools, but are unable to see him. I have thus described the dimensions of kalpas and subdivisions of kalpas. Those who know about the ancient accounts say that a kalpa consists of fourteen manvantaras.'

Chapter 8(15)

The king asked, 'Hari is the lord of everything. Like a distressed person, why did he ask Bali for as much of land as can be covered in three strides? Having obtained his objective, why did he bind him down? We have a great curiosity and we wish to know about this. The lord is absolute. Yet, he begged and bound down an innocent person.'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'O king! He [989] lost his prosperity and was also deprived of his life by Indra. However, Bhrigu's descendants [990] brought him back to life. The great-souled Bali worshipped the Bhrigus with all his soul and became their disciple, offering them everything they wanted. The brahmanas of the Bhrigu lineage were delighted with him. He wished to conquer the three worlds. Following the rites, they consecrated him and performed a Vishvajit sacrifice. The great-minded ones performed this great act of consecration for him. When oblations of clarified butter were offered into the fire of the sacrifice, a chariot encased in gold plates, four tawny horses, and a standard with a lion astride it emerged from the fire. There was also a divine bow plated with gold, two inexhaustible quivers and divine armour. His grandfather [991] gave him a garland made out of flowers that did not fade. Shukra gave him a conch shell. Thus, the brahmanas arranged all the equipment required for victory. After this, the brahmanas pronounced benedictions over him. He prostrated himself before them and circumambulated them. He then bowed down to Prahlada and took his leave. The *maharatha* ascended the divine chariot given by the Bhrigus. He was armoured and adorned in an excellent garland. He held a bow and a sword and girded the quivers. There were dazzling gold armlets on his arms. He resembled the king of oblations [992] on an altar. His own leaders and the leaders of other groups of daityas were his equal in prosperity, strength and beauty. He seemed to drink up the sky and scorch the directions with his sight. The lord attracted and was surrounded by a very large army of asura soldiers. Making the space between heaven and earth tremble with his own prosperity, he left for Indra's city.

'There were beautiful groves and gardens there, the enchanting Nandana and others. Pairs of birds chirped there. There was the buzzing of intoxicated bees. The branches of celestial trees were heavy with the burden of fruits and flowers. The lotus ponds were full of the calls of swans, cranes, chakravakas and karandavas. These were frequented by the gods, and their women sported there. The place was surrounded by a moat, in the form of the goddess Akasha-Ganga. [993] There was a wall with the complexion of the fire and tall mansions. The doors and entrances were made out of gold pan-

els. The gates to the city were made out of crystal. Constructed by Vishvakarma, there were many roads that connected the different parts. There were beautiful assembly halls, quadrangles and roads. There were ten crore vimanas. The quadrangles were paved with gems and there were seats made out of diamonds and coral. The place was radiant with beautiful women, dark [994] and perpetually young, attired in clean garments. They looked like the flames of a fire. A breeze blew along the roads and dislodged fresh and fragrant flowers from the hair and garlands of the divine women, bearing that scent along. There were golden lattices on the windows, and white smoke with the fragrance of aloe emerged through these. Women loved by the gods [995] walked along the streets. The canopies were made out of pearls and the flagpoles were encrusted with gold and jewels. The tops of the mansions were adorned with many flags. There were the sounds of peacocks, pigeons and bees. As women climbed on to the mansions, they sang in auspicious tones. There were melodious and rhythmic tones of drums, conch shells, kettledrums, veenas, smaller drums, flutes and other musical instruments. In harmony with musical instruments, minor divinities sang and danced. The place was so beautiful in its own radiance that it surpassed all kinds of radiance. Those who did not follow dharma, the wicked and deceitful, those who were insolent, lascivious and greedy and those who caused injury to creatures did not go there. Those who went there were devoid of such vices.

'Such was the city of the gods. With his own soldiers, the leader of the army surrounded it from all sides and laid siege to it. He blew loudly on the conch shell that had been given to him by his preceptor. With this sound, he generated fear among Indra's women. Maghavan understood Bali's intentions and his supreme efforts. With the large number of gods, he went to his preceptor [996] and said, "O illustrious one! Because of the former enmity, Bali is making efforts. I think that he is impossible to withstand. How has he earned this energy for himself? No one, from anywhere, is capable of fighting against him. He seems to be licking the ten directions and drinking them up with his mouth. He has arisen like the samvartaka fire and seems to be burning down the directions with his sight. Tell me the reason for this.

How has my enemy become invincible? What is the reason for his prowess, strength, energy and enterprise?" The preceptor replied, "O Maghavan! I know the reason behind your enemy's elevation. He has obtained this energy through becoming the disciple of the Bhrigus, who know about the brahman. No one will ever be able to vanquish the energetic Bali, you, or anyone else on your side. The only exception is the lord Hari. He is full of the energy of the brahman and no one else will be able to defeat him. Just as people cannot stand before Death, no one is capable of standing in front of him. Therefore, all of you should abandon heaven and go and hide. Wait for the time when your enemy faces a calamity. He is flourishing because of the strength of the brahmanas. Right now, he is valiant and invincible. When he dishonours them later, he and his followers will be destroyed." Their preceptor knew about objectives and they received this excellent counsel and instruction from him. The gods, who could assume any form they willed, abandoned heaven. When the gods had hidden themselves, Bali, Virochana's son, brought the city that was the capital of the gods and the three worlds under his subjugation. Bhrigu's descendants were affectionate towards disciples and were kind towards a disciple who had conquered the worlds. He followed their instructions and performed one hundred horse sacrifices. Because of this act, he obtained fame in the three worlds. His glory spread in the directions and he was as radiant as the king of the stars. He enjoyed his own opulence and prosperity, obtained because of brahmanas who were like the gods. The great-minded one thought that he had become successful in his objective.'

Chapter 8(16)

Shri-Shuka said, 'When her sons were destroyed and heaven taken away by the daityas, Aditi, the mother of the gods, was tormented, like one who was without a protector. Once, when the illustrious Kashyapa had taken a break from his meditation after a long period of time, he came to her hermitage and saw that it was cheerless and sad. O extender of the Kuru lin-

eage! As is proper, he was honoured and accepted a seat. He spoke to his wife, whose face was distressed. “O fortunate one! In this world, I hope brahmanas are not facing any misfortune now. I hope dharma or people, who have to follow the caprices of death, do not face a calamity. You are following the path of a householder, and is everything well in your house? In such a state, even those who do not follow yoga are engaged in the pursuit of dharma, artha and kama. Because you are excessively attached to your family, I hope unexpected guests [997] who have visited have never returned without being properly welcomed. A home where an unexpected guest is not even offered some water before departure is indeed like the home of a king of jackals. O fortunate one! O virtuous one! When I went away, was your mind so anxious that you did not offer oblations into the fire at the right time? Brahmanas and the fire represent the mouth of Vishnu, who is in the atmans of all gods. By worshipping them, a householder goes to the world where all the objects of desire are satisfied. O spirited one! Are all your sons well? I can see the signs that all is not well with you.” Aditi replied, “O fortunate one! O brahmana! Brahmanas, cattle, dharma and people are well. O master of the house! This house is a place where the three objectives [998] are pursued properly. O illustrious one! O brahmana! Since I always think about you, the fire, unexpected guests, servants and all mendicants who desire something are always tended to properly. O illustrious one! Since you are a Prajapati and have spoken to me about dharma, how can all the desires of my mind not be satisfied? O son of Marichi! All the subjects, born from your body and your mind, possess sattva, rajas and tamas. O lord! Beginning with the asuras, you are impartial towards everyone. However, even the great lord is partial towards his devotees. O lord! O one who is excellent in vows! Therefore, think of the well-being of those who worship you. They have lost their prosperity. Their rivals have robbed them of their place. O lord! Save us. With me, having been exiled by the enemy, they are immersed in an ocean of hardship. Stronger ones have robbed us of our prosperity, opulence, fame and status. O virtuous one! Let my sons get all that back again. O one who does good things! Please consider and arrange for their well-being.” Thus requested by her, he seemed to

smile and said, "The strength of Vishnu's maya is wonderful. The universe is bound in bonds of affection. What is this physical body, made up of the elements? What is the atman? The atman is superior to Prakriti. Whom do husbands, sons and others belong to? Delusion is the reason behind all this. Worship the illustrious Purusha Janardana. Vasudeva dwells in the inner cores of all creatures. He is the preceptor of the universe. Hari, who is compassionate towards the distressed, will fulfil your desires. It is my view that nothing except devotion to the illustrious one is invincible." Aditi asked, "O brahmana! What rules need to be observed for worshipping the lord of the universe? How can my intentions come true? How will he fulfil my desire? O best among brahmanas! Instruct me about the rules for worshipping him, so that the god is quickly satisfied. I, and my sons, are suffering."

'Kashyapa said, "Desiring offspring, I asked the illustrious one born from the lotus [999] this. He told me about the vow for satisfying Keshava and I will tell you about it. For the first twelve days of shukla paksha in the month of Phalguna, [1000] one must observe the vow of subsisting only on milk. Full of supreme devotion, one must worship the lotus-eyed one. If earth dug up by a wild boar is available, on the day of *sinivali*, one must smear oneself with this and have a bath. Standing in a current, [1001] one must chant the following mantra. 'O goddess! [1002] You desired a place and the original boar raised you up from rasatala. I bow down to you. Destroy all my sins.' Having finished, one must complete the daily rituals and, controlling oneself, worship the god. He can be worshipped on an altar, [1003] or in the form of the sun, the water, the fire or the preceptor. 'O illustrious one! I bow down to you, the great Purusha. You dwell in all creatures. O Vasudeva! You are the witness. I bow down to the one who is not manifest. You are subtle. You are Pradhana and Purusha. You are the one who knows about the twenty-four principles. You are the cause behind the principles of samkhya. I bow down before the one with two heads, three feet and four horns. Your form has seven arms. I bow down to the one with the three kinds of knowledge in him. [1004] I bow down to the one who is Shiva. I bow down to the one who is Rudra. I bow down to the one who wields the powers. I bow down to the one who is the lord of all kinds of knowledge. I bow down to the lord of all creatures. I

bow down to Hiranyagarbha, the source of the breath of life, the atman of the universe. Your body is full of yoga and opulence. I bow down to the one who is the source of yoga. I bow down to the original god. I bow down to the one who is a witness to all creatures. I bow down to the rishis Nara and Narayana, to Hari. I bow down to the one whose body is as dark as emerald, to the one who is Shri's master. O Keshava! I bow down to you. I bow down to the one who is attired in yellow garments. You are the one who bestows all the boons. You are the being who should be worshipped. You are foremost among those who grant boons. That is the reason, for their benefit, persevering ones worship the dust of your feet. You are followed by the gods and Shri. They desire the bliss of your lotus feet. O illustrious one! Show me your favours.' Hrishikesha must be honoured and invited with these mantras. He must be worshipped with devotion, with padya and the other ingredients. He must be worshipped with incense, garlands and other objects. The lord must be bathed with milk. He must be adorned with garments, a sacred thread and ornaments and again offered padya and the other ingredients. He must be worshipped with fragrances, incense and other objects, using the mantra with twelve aksharas. [1005] If it is possible, *shali* rice [1006] cooked in milk mixed with clarified butter and molasses must be offered. Using the root mantra, [1007] this must be offered to him as an oblation in the fire. Or one can offer it to a devotee, or eat it oneself. After this worship, one must offer him water to wash the mouth and betel leaf. One must praise the lord by chanting the mantra one hundred and eight times. Having circumambulated him, one must happily prostrate oneself on the ground, like a rod. One must bend one's head down to whatever is left of the offerings to the god. After this, depending on what they deserve, two brahmanas must be fed *payasam*. [1008] Honouring them and with their permission, with one's relatives, one should eat whatever is left. On the night of the first day, one must observe brahmacharya. Next morning, one must perform the proper ablutions. With a controlled mind, one must follow the rituals and bathe him [1009] with milk. Such worship must continue until the period of the vow is over. Without exception, one must observe this vow of worshipping Vishnu, subsisting only on milk. As has been stated earlier, one must offer obla-

tions into the fire and feed brahmanas. In this way, every day, one must observe the vow of subsisting on milk for twelve days. One must worship Hari, offer oblations into the fire and satisfy brahmanas. Beginning with *pratipada*, [1010] until the thirteenth day of shukla paksha, one must observe brahmacharya, sleep on the ground and bathe thrice a day. One must not speak an untruth, nor converse about superior or inferior objects of pleasure. One must be devoted to Vasudeva and avoid violence towards all creatures. On the thirteenth day, following the instructions of those who know about the rites, one must follow the rites and bathe Vishnu with the five objects. [1011] Abandoning all deceit and thought of wealth, one must perform this great act of worship. One must perceive Vishnu as omnipresent and cook charu in milk. Extremely controlled, one must worship Purusha with mantras. One must offer food with excellent qualities to Purusha, so as to satisfy him. One must satisfy the learned preceptor and the officiating priests with garments, ornaments and cattle, understanding that this is also a form of Hari's worship. O one with the beautiful smiles! According to one's capacity one must feed them and the other brahmanas who have assembled there, with excellent food. As they deserve, dakshina must be given to the preceptor and the officiating priests. Those who have come there, even svapachas, must be pleased with food. One must recognize that pleasing everyone, the distressed, the blind and the miserable, is the same as pleasing Vishnu. After this, with the relatives, one can enjoy what is left. Every day, the worship of the illustrious one must be accompanied with dancing, singing, the playing of musical instruments, the pronouncement of praises and benedictions and the rectial of his accounts. This supreme worship of Purusha is known as *payovrata*. The grandfather told me about it and I have explained it to you. O extremely fortunate one! With pure sentiments and controlling your mind, you must properly worship the undecaying Keshava. This is said to be *sarva-yajna*. [1012] This is said to be all the vows. O fortunate one! This is said to be the essence of all austerities and all worship to the lord. This is the best of yama and niyama, austerities, gifts, vows and sacrifices. Adhokshaja is directly satisfied with this. O fortunate one! There-

fore, be faithful in conduct, control yourself and observe this vow. Satisfied with you, the illustrious one will swiftly bestow a boon on you."'

Chapter 8(17)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O king! Aditi was thus addressed by her husband, Kashyapa. Attentively, she observed this vow for twelve days. With single-minded intelligence, she thought of the lord, the great being. She used her mind to control the wicked horses, in the form of the senses. She used her intelligence as a charioteer. Her mind and intelligence were single-mindely fixed on the illustrious one who is in all atmans. She meditated on Vasudeva and observed payovrata. After this, the illustrious and original being manifested himself before her. He was attired in yellow garments. He was four-armed and held a conch shell, a chakra and a mace. [1013] On seeing him before her eyes, she suddenly stood up. Like a rod, she respectfully lowered her body down on the ground. Because of her delight, she was confused. After rising up, she tried to praise him, her hands joined in salutation. However, because her eyes were filled with tears of joy, she could not do so. With her body hair standing up, she remained silent. Her body trembled at the bliss of having been able to see him. O extender of the Kuru lineage! The goddess Aditi praised Hari in faltering words that choked with joy. She looked at Rama's lord, the lord of sacrifices and the lord of the universe and seemed to drink him up with her eyes.

'Aditi said, "O lord of sacrifices! O one who is the sacrifice! O Achyuta! O one whose feet are tirthas! O one whose feet the tirthas seek refuge in! The hearing of the chanting of your name is auspicious. When you appear, you relieve the sins of people who seek refuge with you. O lord! O illustrious one! You are the protector of those who are distressed. Bestow well-being on us. You are the universe. You are behind the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe. You have yourself completely accepted the power of the gunas and other potencies. You are eternal and self-poised. You are the one who possesses complete knowledge. You have yourself dis-

pelled the darkness. O Hari! I bow down to you. If you are satisified, from you, men can obtain the lifespan of two parardhas, a desired body, unmatched prosperity, heaven, earth and the nether regions, all the qualities obtained through yoga, the three objectives of existence, knowledge and kaivalya. O Ananta! If one desires victory over an enemy, it is nothing in comparison."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'O king! The illustrious and lotus-eyed one was praised by Aditi. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The kshetrajna who is in all creatures replied.

'The illustrious one replied, "O mother of the gods! I know what you have desired for a very long time. The rivals have stolen their prosperity and have dislodged them from their own abode. You have worshipped me because you wish to see that your sons obtain victory and prosperity, having vanquished the indomitable bulls among the asuras in a field of battle. Indra is the eldest among your sons and you wish to see his enemies slain in a battle. Their miserable wives will then approach the dead bodies and weep. You wish to see that your own sons sport in great prosperity, stationed in the vault of heaven and having got back the fame and prosperity they were deprived of. O goddess! It is my view that the leaders of the hordes of asuras are now generally unconquerable. They are protected by brahmanas, whom the lord favours. Under these circumstances, valour will not bring happiness. O goddess! However, since you have satisfied me by observing the vow, I must think of a means. My worship does not deserve to be rendered futile. It has been performed faithfully, with a certain objective in mind. You have worshipped me properly, with the excellent payovrata vow. Thus worshipped, I must protect your offspring. O fortunate one! Go and worship your husband. He is an unblemished Prajapati. Think that I exist in the form of your husband. If you are asked, you must never reveal this to anyone else. O goddess! This must be concealed and kept a secret from the gods too. All will be well."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'Having told her this, the illustrious one vanished from the spot. Aditi obtained the extremely rare boon that lord Hari would be born as her son. She faithfully approached her husband and served him

with supreme devotion. Immersed in the meditation of yoga, Kashyapa, whose vision was infallible, perceived that Hari's portion had entered into him. O king! Through austerities performed over a long period of time, he held that energy and then, with a controlled mind, transferred it into Aditi, just as the wind places a fire into two pieces of wood. [1014] Hiranyagarbha [1015] got to know that Aditi was holding the eternal and illustrious one in her womb. He praised him, using mysterious names. Brahma said, "Victory to the glorious and illustrious one. O Urukrama! I bow down before you. I bow down to the one who protects brahmanas and gods. I bow down to the lord of the three gunas. I bow down to the one born in Prishni's womb. [1016] You are full of knowledge and the Vedas originate in you. The three worlds are in your navel. You transcend the three worlds. You are omnipresent. You are Vishnu. You are the beginning, the middle and the end of the universe. You are infinite in your powers. You are spoken of as Purusha. You are time. You are the lord who attracts the universe into your own self, just as a current sweeps along everything that falls into it, into the deep. O Vishnu! O god! You are the origin of subjects, mobile and immobile objects, the Prajapatis, the residents of heaven and those who have been dislodged from heaven. Like a boat, you are the refuge for those who are immersed in water."'

Chapter 8(18)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Thus, Virinchi praised his deeds and his valour. Immortal in his appearance, he manifested himself from Aditi. He was four-armed and held a conch shell, a mace, a lotus and a chakra. He was attired in yellow garments and his large eyes were like the petals of a lotus. He was dark in complexion, with dazzling earrings shaped like the king of fish. [1017] Purusha's radiant and beautiful face was like a lotus. The shrivatsa mark was on his chest. He was adorned in handsome and shining bracelets, armlets, a diadem, an excellent girdle and anklets. Hari wore a beautiful garland of wild flowers and naturally, bees buzzed around it for honey. The Koustubha

gem hung around his neck. His own radiance destroyed the darkness in Prajapati's house. The directions were happy. The waterbodies and the subjects were delighted. The seasons became full of all the qualities. Heaven, the firmament, earth, those for whom fire is the tongue, [1018] cattle, brahmanas and mountains were filled with joy. When the lord was born, the moon was in Shravana nakshatra and it was the twelfth day of shukla paksha in the month of Bhadrapada. [1019] The muhurta was Abhijit. All the nakshatras and stars indicated that this would be an auspicious birth. O king! On that twelfth day, the sun was stationed in the middle of the sky. This time of Hari's birth is known by the name of Vijaya. [1020] Conch shells and drums were sounded. Kettledrums, tambourines and other musical instruments were sounded. There was the wonderful sound of trumpets being played. There was a tumultuous sound. Delighted, the apsaras danced and the foremost among gandharvas sang. The sages, the gods, the Manus, the ancestors and the divinities of the fire praised him. Large numbers of Siddhas, vidyadharas, kimpurushas, kinnaras, charanas, yakshas, rakshasas, birds and supreme serpents sang his praise. The followers of the gods danced. They showered down flowers on the area around Aditi's hermitage. Aditi was delighted and amazed to see that the supreme Purusha had taken birth from her womb. Using the maya of his yoga, he had assumed a body. Prajapati [1021] was also surprised and exclaimed, "May you be victorious." Hari's consciousness is not manifested. But he manifested himself and assumed that form, with ornaments and weapons. While all of them looked on, divine in his movements, like an actor, he transformed himself into a dwarf brahmana. On seeing the form of a dwarf brahmana, the maharshis rejoiced. They placed Prajapati at their head and performed all the required rites. When his sacred thread ceremony was being performed, the sun god himself uttered the savitri mantra. Brihaspati gave him the sacred thread and Kashyapa gave him the girdle. [1022] The earth gave him black antelope skin. Soma, the lord of trees, gave him a staff. His mother covered him with a piece of cloth and the firmament gave the lord of the universe an umbrella. The source of the Vedas [1023] gave him a water pot. The saptarshis gave him kusha grass. O great king! Sarasvati gave the one whose atman is without

decay a string of aksha beads. [1024] When the sacred thread investiture was over, the king of the yakshas [1025] gave him a vessel for begging alms. Bhagavati Uma Ambika herself gave him the first alms. The assembly was full of large numbers of brahmana rishis. However, the revered dwarf was so suffused with the radiance of the brahman that his resplendence surpassed all of them. The brahmana properly placed kusha grass and kindling and ignited a fire, offering oblations into it.

'He heard that Bali was performing a wonderful horse sacrifice, undertaken by those of the Bhrigu lineage. Accumulating the essence of the entire universe within himself, he went there, and because of the great burden, the earth trembled at each of his steps. In the place known as Bhrigu-kachchha, [1026] on the northern banks of the Narmada, the officiating priests of the Bhrigu lineage were undertaking this excellent sacrifice. From a distance, they saw him arrive, like the rising sun. O king! Vamana's energy robbed the officiating priests, the assistant priests and the one performing the sacrifice [1027] of their radiance. They asked each other whether the sun god, the fire god or Sanatkumara had come to witness the sacrifice. While those of the Bhrigu lineage and their disciples were debating with each other in many ways, the illustrious vamana entered the arena of the horse sacrifice, holding the umbrella, the staff and the water pot filled with water. His girdle was made out of munja grass. He wore a sacred thread and an upper garment made out of black antelope skin. His hair was matted. Hari had used his maya to assume the form of the brahmana vamana. When he entered, his energy robbed the resplendence of the Bhrigus, their disciples and the sacrificial fires. On seeing him, they stood up and welcomed him. The one performing the sacrifice was delighted to see his pleasant and charming form and limbs. He himself offered him a seat. Bali welcomed and worshipped the illustrious one, washing the feet of the one whose form is pleasant to those who have freed themselves of attachment. The water that had been used to wash the feet was extremely auspicious and was capable of washing away the sins of people. Knowing about dharma, he placed the water on his head. This is the water Girisha, the god of the gods with the moon on his crest, holds on his head with supreme devotion. Bali said, "Welcome. I bow

down to you. O brahmana! What can we do for you? O noble one! I think that your form directly holds the austerities of the brahmana rishis. Today, our ancestors have been satisfied. Today, our lineage has been purified. Since you have come to our home, today, the sacrifice has been properly performed. Today, following the proper rites, excellent oblations have been offered into the fire. O son of a brahmana! Your feet have purified this land and people. The water has destroyed and cleansed. Your tiny feet have sanctified everything. O dwarf! You can take from me whatever you wish for, whatever is your objective. O son of a brahmana! Without thinking about it, I will give you land, gold, an abode with excellent qualities, tasty food, drinks, the daughter of a brahmana, prosperous villages, horses, elephants or chariots. O best among those who are worshipped! Accept them."'

Chapter 8(19)

Shri-Shuka said, 'These words of Virochana's son were full of dharma and extremely true. Hearing them, the illustrious one was delighted. He honoured them and spoke.

'The illustrious one said, "O lord of men! These words of yours are extremely true and worthy of your lineage. They are full of dharma and bring fame. In this world, those of the Bhrigu lineage tell you what to do. For the next world, your yardstick is the serene elder of your lineage, your grandfather. [1028] In this lineage, there has never been a man who is miserly or without spirit. There is no one who has not given to brahmanas. Nor has there been a person who having promised, has gone back on his word. O king! In the tirtha of the battlefield, there was never an inferior person who refused to grant a duel to those who wished for it. Your lineage is unblemished in its fame. Like the moon, Prahlada rises in the sky. Hiranyaksha was born here. Alone, he roamed the earth on his attempt to conquer, with the club as his weapon. However, he could not find a valiant warrior who could counter him. When he arrived to deliver the earth, Vishnu defeated him with a great deal of difficulty. Repeatedly remembering his great valour, he [1029] did not

take himself to have been victorious. In earlier times, hearing that his brother had been killed, Hiranyakashipu angrily went to Hari's abode, wishing to slay his brother's killer. Vishnu, supreme among those who know about maya, saw him arrive with the trident in his hand, resembling Death. Knowing about the appropriate time, he thought. 'Like death follows those with life, he will go wherever I go. Therefore, I will enter the heart of a person who only looks outside.' O Indra among the asuras! Having determined this, he entered the body of his enemy who was advancing towards him. Assuming a subtle form and undetected, anxious in his mind, he entered through the nostrils when he was breathing. [1030] The valiant one searched everywhere, but could not see Vishnu. He searched Vishnu's residence, but it was empty. He searched the earth, the firmament, the directions, the sky, the caves and the oceans. Unable to see him, he roared in rage. He said, 'I have searched the entire universe, but cannot see him. My brother's killer must certainly have gone to the place from where no man returns.' [1031] In this way, an embodied being is bound by enmity right up to the time of death. Because of the power of ignorance, rage and ego are enhanced. Your father was Prahlada's son. He knew this and was devoted to brahmanas. Though he knew that it was the gods who had come to him in the disguise of brahmanas and asked, he gave them his own lifespan. You have also followed the dharma that householders resort to, by brahmanas, by your ancestors and by other brave ones whose fame is extensive. You are foremost among those who can grant boons and, in truth, are capable of bestowing the entire earth. O Indra among daityas! However, I only ask for that much of land that can be measured out in three of my strides. O king! O generous one! From someone who is the lord of the universe, I do not wish for anything else. If a learned person only accepts as much as is required by him, he does not contract any sin."

'Bali replied, "O son of a brahmana! Wonderful. Your words are revered by the aged. You are a child and your intelligence is like that of a child. You do not know what is good for your own self. I am the lord of the worlds. You have pleased me with your words. I can give you an entire dvipa. However, you have only asked for as much of land as can be covered in three of

your strides. A person who approaches me does not deserve to go to anyone else thereafter. O dwarf brahmana! Therefore, desire as much of land as will make it possible for you to ensure your subsistence."

'The illustrious one said, "O king! If a person has not conquered his senses, all the desired objects in the three worlds are incapable of satisfying him. If a person is not satisfied with as much of land as can be covered in three strides, he will not be satisfied with a dvipa. Even if I possessed it, with its nine varshas, I would still wish for all seven dvipas. We have heard that kings like Vena's son [1032] and Gaya were the lords of seven dvipas. Despite this, there was no end to their thirst for other objects of desire. A person who is satisfied with whatever that comes to him is happy. A person who has not conquered himself is not satisfied, even if he obtains the three worlds. Discontentment about artha and kama is the reason people are tied to samsara. It is said that a person who is content with whatever that comes to him is destined for liberation. The energy of a brahmana who is satisfied with whatever that comes to him is enhanced. However, like water poured into a fire, it diminishes because of discontentment. O one who is foremost among those who grant boons! Therefore, I only wish for as much as can be covered in three of my strides. This will bring me success and I will obtain all the wealth that I require."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'Addressed in this way, he laughed and said, "Fine. Take what you want." To give vamana the required land, he picked up a vessel full of water. [1033] The lord of the asuras was ready to give Vishnu the land. However, Ushanas, supreme among learned ones, knew what Vishnu desired. He spoke to his disciple. Shukracharya said, "O Virochana's son! This is the illustrious and undecaying Vishnu himself. To accomplish the purpose of the gods, he has been born through Kashyapa and Aditi. You do not know the calamity you have brought on yourself by giving him a pledge. I do not think this is good for the daityas. A great disaster has arisen. This is Hari, using his maya to appear as a human. He will take away your position, opulence, prosperity, energy, fame and learning and confer it on Shakra. Assuming his universal form, he will cover the three worlds in his three strides. O foolish one! Why did you act in this way? You

have given everything to Vishnu. The lord will cover the earth in one stride and heaven in the second. He will cover the firmament with his gigantic body. Where will be the space for the third step? Having promised to give it to him, I think that you will remain in hell. You have promised something that you are incapable of fulfilling. Charity that causes a danger to one's means of subsistence is not praised. In this world, charity, sacrifices, austerities and deeds must be undertaken by those who possess a means of subsistence. A person who divides his wealth into five parts, for dharma, for fame, for artha, for kama and for his own relatives, rejoices in this world and in the next. O supreme among asuras! In this connection, there is a chant from the sacred texts. Hear it from me. 'Something that is preceded by "Oum" is true and something that is not preceded by it is false.' [1034] It is chanted that one should know truth as the flower and the fruit of a tree formed by the body. [1035] It exists as long as the body is alive. However, if one's root does not exist, everything is false. A tree that is uprooted soon dries up and ceases to exist. But if there is a doubt about the body drying up, any notion of falsehood is instantly destroyed. Without the syllable, anything that is said is incomplete and a man is no longer separated from what he promised. If one desires one's own welfare, it is enough that one gives everything to a mendicant only after pronouncing this syllable. Therefore, what you said was incomplete and your words will not be rendered false. It is said that a person who actually utters a falsehood performs a wicked deed and is as good as dead, even if he is breathing. Nor are false statements condemned when they are made for the sake of women, in jest, at the time of marriages, for the sake of subsistence, when there is a threat to life, for the sake of cattle and brahmanas, and when there is the threat of violence.'"'

Chapter 8(20)

Shri-Shuka said, 'The preceptor of the lineage, addressed Bali, the master of the household, in this way. He was silent for a while. Then after thinking about it, he addressed his preceptor in the following words.

‘Bali said, “O illustrious one! What you have said about dharma is true. A householder must never cause obstructions towards artha, kama, fame and means of subsistence. However, because of my love for riches, how can I refuse a brahmana? I have pledged that I will give. I am descended from Prahlada, I am not a deceiver. The earth has said, ‘There is nothing worse than adharma. I think that I am capable of bearing all burdens, except the worst among liars.’ I am not scared of hell, lack of riches, submergence in an ocean of grief, displacement from my position or death as much as I am of cheating a brahmana. Everything, wealth and other things, is separated from a person who leaves for the next world. If a brahmana is satisfied from giving that up, what is wrong with that? Virtuous people like Dadhichi, Shibi [1036] and others have given up their own lives, so very difficult to give up, for the benefit of creatures. Why should one bother about the earth and other things? O brahmana! The Indras among the daityas did not retreat from the field of battle. They enjoyed the worlds, until they were taken away by time. However, their fame on earth remained. O brahmana rishi! Those who follow such conduct and lay down their lives in the field of battle are easy to find. However, when a worthy recipient arrives, it is not that easy to find those who faithfully give up their riches. A spirited and compassionate person becomes better when he satisfies the wishes of a supplicant, even if that leads to great hardship for himself. That is especially true of those like you, who know about the brahman. Therefore, I will give the dwarf brahmana what he wants. O sage! Those like you are accomplished in your knowledge about respectfully performing yajnas and kratus and the associated rituals. Therefore, whether this is Vishnu, the bestower of boons, or whether this is an enemy, I will give him the land that he desires. Even if the enemy follows adharma and binds down an innocent person like me, because he is scared and has assumed the form of a brahmana, I will not cause him any violence. If this is Uttamashloka, he will not give up his fame. He will kill me in battle and seize this, or will be slain by me and will lie down.”’

Shri-Shuka continued, ‘The spirited disciple did not waver from the truth and ignored the command. At this, goaded by destiny, the preceptor cursed

him. “Regarding yourself as learned, you are convinced. You are insolent and have shown us disrespect by disregarding my command. Therefore, you will soon be dislodged from your prosperity.” Despite being cursed by his own preceptor, he did not deviate from his great pledge. Having touched water first, he worshipped vamana and gave it to him. At that time, his wife, Vindhyabali, came there, wearing a necklace of pearls. For washing the feet, she brought a golden pot filled with water. Delighted, the performer of the sacrifice himself washed the handsome feet. That water was capable of purifying the universe and he sprinkled it on his head. All the large number of gods in heaven, the gandharvas, the vidyadharas, the Siddhas and the charanas praised the uprightness of the Indra among the asuras and happily showered down flowers on him. Thousands of drums were repeatedly sounded. The gandharvas, kimpurushas and kinnaras sang. “This spirited one has performed an extremely difficult act. Despite knowing, he has given away the three worlds to the enemy.” At this, Hari Ananta, with the three gunas in him, wonderfully expanded that vamana form, so that it covered the earth, the sky, the directions, heaven, caves, the oceans, inferior species, humans, gods, rishis and everything else that existed. With the officiating priests, preceptors and everyone present at the assembly, Bali saw the great potency of this body. The universe and the three gunas were in him. All the attributes were in him. The elements, the senses, the objects of the senses, the mind and the jivatmans were in him. The one whose army was like that of Indra’s [1037] saw rasatala and the nether regions on the soles of Purusha’s feet, the earth on his feet, the mountains on his calves, the birds on his knees and all the different kinds of wind on his thighs. The universe was in his form. He saw the two sandhyas in the lord’s garments, the Prajapatis in his genital organs, he and the other foremost ones in his hips, the sky in his navel, the seven oceans on his flanks and the garland of nakshatras on Urukrama’s chest. O dear one! O king! Dharma was in Murari’s heart, divine truth and truth on his two breasts, [1038] the moon in his mind, Shri, with a lotus in her hand, on his chest, the Sama hymns and their vibrations on his throat, Indra and the other chief immortals on his arms, the directions in his ears, heaven on his head, the clouds in his hair, the breath of life in his nos-

trils, the sun in his eyes, the fire in his mouth, the metres in his speech, the lord of the waters in his tongue, the prohibitions and the rules in his eyebrows, day and night in his eyelashes, anger in supreme Purusha's forehead, avarice in his lower lip, desire in his touch, water in his semen, adharma on his back, sacrifices in his strides, death in his shadow, maya in his laughter, the different types of herbs in his body hair, the rivers in his arteries, the boulders in his nails, Aja [1039] in his intelligence, the large numbers of gods and rishis in his breath and all creatures and mobile and immobile objects on his body. This is what the valiant one saw. O dear one! All the asuras saw everything in the universe in his person and were filled with lassitude. They saw the extremely energetic Sudarshana chakra and Sharnga bow, twanging like thunder. The conch Panchajanya's blare was like that of a cloud filled with rain. There was Vishnu's swift club, known as Koumadaki, the sword Vidyadhara, the shield Shatachandra and two inexhaustible quivers filled with arrows. Sunanda and the other foremost attendants, along with the guardians of the world, waited upon the lord. His diadem, armlets and earrings shaped like fish [1040] dazzled. Shrivatsa and the excellent gem [1041] were on his chest. He wore garments and a girdle. He wore a garland of wild flowers, with bees buzzing around it. O king! The illustrious Urukrama was resplendent. He covered Bali's earth with one stride. He covered the sky with his body and the directions with his arms. With the second stride, he covered heaven. There was no space left for the third stride. Urukrama's strides extended higher and higher, going beyond *maharloka*, *janarloka* and *taparloka*.' [1042]

Chapter 8(21)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O lord among men! The one born from the lotus saw that the nails, which were like the moon, had reached Satyaloka. [1043] Enveloped by this radiance, his own abode lost its lustre. He welcomed it, as did Marichi and the other rishis, great in their vows, Sanandana and the others and yogis. The Vedas, the subsidiary Vedas, [1044] niyamas, yamas, *tarka*,

[1045] Itihasa, [1046] the Vedangas, the Puranas, the Samhitas and other forms of knowledge that burn down the sins of karma with the fire of knowledge, fanned by the wind of yoga, worshipped him. There were also those who had gone to Svayambhu's abode after death, a place that cannot be reached through karma. When Vishnu's revered foot arrived, the one born from the lotus bowed down and worshipped it with water. He worshipped it devotedly and chanted its glory, since he was himself generated from the lotus in Shuchishrava's [1047] navel. O Indra among men! Having washed Urukrama's lotus feet, the water from the water pot became sanctified and became the heavenly river. [1048] Like the illustrious one, because it has been sanctified, it is famous. It descends, purifying the three worlds. Brahma and the guardians of the world welcomed their own lord, with their followers. They brought various offerings to the one who was extensive in his powers, but had now reduced himself. [1049] There was water for worship, garlands, divine fragrances and unguents, fragrant incense, lamps, parched grain, unbroken rice, fruits and sprouts. There were sounds of praise and pronouncements of victory, highlighting his valour and greatness. There were the sounds of dancing, singing, the playing of musical instruments, conch shells and drums. Jambavat, the king of the bears, with a speed like that of thought, used a drum to announce victory in all the directions and also announced a great festival.

'Their own master had consecrated himself. [1050] Under the pretext of asking for as much of land as could be covered in three strides, the asuras saw that the entire earth had been taken away and turned extremely intolerant. "This one is not even a brahma-bandhu. He is Vishnu, supreme among those who use maya. Wishing to perform the task of the gods, he disguised himself in the form of a brahmana. The enemy came in the form of a dwarf brahmana and sought this. He has stolen everything from us. Because our lord was engaged in performing a sacrifice, he could not punish him. He is always devoted to the vow of the truth, especially when he has consecrated himself. Because he is compassionate towards brahmanas, he is incapable of uttering a falsehood. Therefore, our dharma is to serve our lord by killing him." Hence, Bali's followers, the asuras, seized their weapons. O king!

Against Bali's wishes, filled with rage, all of them rushed to slay vamana, with tridents and spears in their hands. O king! When they saw the soldiers of Diti's descendants rush forward, Vishnu's followers laughed and repulsed them with their own weapons. Nanda, Sunanda, Jaya, Vijaya, Prabala, Bala, Kumuda, Kumudaksha, Vishvaksena, the king of the birds, Jayanta, Shrutadeva, Pushpadanta, Satvata—all of them possessed the strength of ten thousand elephants. They slew the army of the asuras. Bali saw that his own men and companions were being killed. He remembered Kavya's [1051] curse and angrily restrained them. "O Viprachitti! O Rahu! O Nemi! Listen to my words. Do not fight. Return. Time is not in our favour. O daityas! He is the lord of all creatures. He is the lord of happiness and unhappiness. He is the lord who is the supreme Purusha. No one can repulse him. Formerly, he was in our favour and not in favour of the residents of heaven. However, today, the illustrious one is acting in the opposite way. No one can transgress time with strength, advisers, intelligence, fortifications, mantras, herbs and modes like sama and the others. [1052] These followers of Hari have been defeated by you on many occasions. However, because of destiny, they have vanquished us now and are roaring. When destiny is pleased with us, we will defeat them. Therefore, wait for the occasion when time becomes favourable towards us." O king! Hearing the words of their lord and oppressed by Vishnu's attendants, the leaders of the daityas and the danavas entered rasatala.

'Tarkshya's son, the king of the birds, got to know what his master desired. On the day when soma juice is extracted for the sacrifice, [1053] he bound Bali down in Varuna's noose. When the lord of the asuras was thus being taken away by Vishnu, extensive in his powers, loud lamentations were heard in heaven, the earth and all the directions. O king! He was bound down in Varuna's noose. He had lost all his prosperity. But extensive in his fame, he was still firm in his determination. The illustrious vamana spoke to him. "O asura! You gave me as much of land as could be covered in three of my strides. I have covered the entire world with two strides. Think of a place for the third. Till the place where the sun heats with its rays, till the place where the moon and the stars provide illumination, till

the place where Parjanya showers down, all that land was yours. However, with one stride, I have covered the earth, the sky and the directions. While you looked on, with the second stride, I have covered heaven and the upper worlds. Because you cannot give what you pledged, you must reside in hell. Therefore, with your preceptor's sanction, go and enter hell. For someone who has fallen into the nether regions, heaven is far away and all his wishes amount to nothing. But this is what happens to someone who does not give a supplicant what he has pledged. I have been cheated. Because of your pride and insolence, you promised to give me. As a fruit of that deceit, you will enjoy hell for some years."'

Chapter 8(22)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O king! The asura Bali was thus deceived by the illustrious one. Though he had suffered, his spirit was not diminished. Without being agitated, he replied in the following words. Bali said, "O Uttamashloka! O noble divinity! You said that you think my words have been rendered false. However, I will act so that you are not deceived. Place your third stride on my head. I am not frightened of hell, being dislodged from my position, being bound in a noose, suffering from something that is difficult to counter, lack of riches or punishment inflicted by you. However, I become extremely anxious if I am called ignoble. I think that punishment imposed by the most worthy of persons should be praised more than punishment inflicted by a mother, a father, a brother or a well-wisher. Indeed, indirectly, you have been the best of preceptors for us asuras. Many of us were blind because of our insolence and deviated. You have given us insight. Many among those who are other than gods [1054] were bound firm in enmity towards you. But it is said that they obtained a success that single-minded yogis aspire for. You are extensive in your deeds and I have been imprisoned by you, bound down in Varuna's fetters. But I am not ashamed or distressed because of that. My grandfather, Prahlada, is revered by your devotees and praised by the virtuous. Having discovered a supreme refuge like you, he

was subjected to many kinds of hardships by his own father, who was against you. What use is this body! At the end, it is cast away. What is the use of those who are known as relatives? They are like bandits and plunder one's riches. What is the point of a wife? She is the reason behind being born in samsara. For a mortal person, what is the point of a house? All this is a wasting of one's lifespan. My glorious grandfather was deep in his understanding. O supreme one! Having determined this, he sought the eternal refuge of your feet, which offer fearlessness from everything. Even though you had destroyed those on his own side, he was not terrified. Though you are our enemy, destiny has conveyed me to your presence. My prosperity has forcibly been taken away from me. This life is always near death and temporary. However, because the intelligence is stupefied, a person does not comprehend this." O best among the Kurus! While he was speaking in this way, Prahlada, loved by the illustrious one, arrived there, like the lord of the stars, when it rises.

'The one with an army like Indra's looked at his own grandfather's resplendence. He stood there, with eyes that were as large as lotuses. He was tall and attired in yellow garments. His arms were long and his complexion was like that of collyrium. He was chief among those who possessed an auspicious appearance. Bali was restrained in Varuna's noose and could no longer offer him honours, as earlier. With tears flowing from his eyes, he bowed down his head. His face was cast downwards in shame. The great-minded one [1055] saw Hari, the lord of virtuous people, seated there, served by Sunanda and his other followers. He approached and lowered his head down on the ground. He was overwhelmed with tears and the hair on his head stood up. Prahlada said, "You are the one who granted him the status of Indra and it is appropriate that you should take it away today. I think that you have granted him a great favour. You have dislodged him from the prosperity that was causing his self-delusion. Even a learned person is confounded by it. One can no longer realize the progress of the atman. Therefore, I bow down to you, the lord of the universe. O Narayana! For all the worlds, you are the witness." O king! Prahlada stood with hands joined in salutation. In his hearing, the illustrious Hiranyagarbha [1056] addressed Mad-

husudana. O king! On seeing her husband bound down, his virtuous wife was distracted by fear. She approached and joined her hands in salutation before Upendra. [1057] With her face cast downwards, she spoke. [1058] Vindhyavali said, "For the sake of your own pastimes, you have created the three worlds. But there are others, evil in their intelligence, who take themselves to be owners and masters. [1059] You are the creator, preserver and destroyer and there is no one else. They have abandoned their shame and falsely speak of themselves as owners. What can they offer you?" Brahma said, "O creator of creatures! O lord of beings! O god of gods! O one who pervades the universe! Everything has been taken away from him. Free him. He should not be punished any more. He has given everything to you, earth and all the worlds, everything that he won through his deeds. His intelligence is such that without hesitation, he has given you everything, including his own self. Without any deceit, if a person gives you water for washing your feet and devotedly worships you with blades of durva grass, he enjoys himself in the most exalted of destinations. Without any hesitation, this one has given you the three worlds. How does he deserve this suffering?"

'The illustrious one replied, "O Brahma! I show my favours to a person by taking away his riches. Because of these, a person becomes insolent and proud and shows disrespect to the worlds and to me. Because of his own deeds, a jivatman roams around in samsara. Not independent, he goes through births in many different kinds of species. It is only rarely that he is born as a human being. If a person does not possess birth, deeds, youth, beauty, learning, prosperity, riches and pride, that is because of my favours. A person who is devoted to me should not be confused by pride, insolence and birth and various other things that cause these. All these are impediments in the way of what is beneficial. This one is foremost among the danavas and the daityas and has extended his fame. He has also been able to defeat the invincible maya. That is the reason he is not deluded in the midst of this hardship. His wealth has diminished. He has been dislodged from his position. He has been assailed and bound down by the enemy. He has been abandoned by his relatives. He has experienced pain. He has been abused and cursed by his preceptor. But, excellent in his vows, he has not wavered

from the truth. Speaking about dharma, I deceived him. However, truthful in speech, he did not abandon it. He has therefore obtained a state that even the immortals find extremely difficult to get. With me as a refuge, he will be the Indra during Savarni manvantara. Till then, he will dwell in Sutala, constructed by Vishvakarma. I cast my glance at those who live there and they do not suffer from mental and physical ailments, exhaustion, laziness, defeat and other such symptoms. O great king! O one with an army like Indra's! Go there. May you be fortunate. Sutala is desired even by the residents of heaven. Surround yourself with your relatives. Even the lords of the worlds will not be able to vanquish you, not to speak of others. My chakra will destroy all daityas who transgress your commands. I will protect you in every way, with your followers and your possessions. O brave one! I will always be there and you will be able to see me. When you associate with danavas and daityas, if there are any asura sentiments in you, or any anxiety because of that, those will instantly be destroyed when you see me."'

Chapter 8(23)

Shri-Shuka said, 'The great person, revered by all virtuous people, was thus addressed by the ancient Purusha. He joined his hands in salutation, his voice choked and his eyes were full of tears. His words faltering because of his devotion, he said the following. Bali said, "Even an effort of bowing down to you is wonderful. There are those who control themselves and bow down to you in the proper way. However, I have obtained favours that the guardians of the world and the immortals have not obtained earlier. In addition, this has been bestowed on an evil asura like me." Having said this, he bowed down to Hari, Brahma and Bhava. Freed from the bondage, Bali happily entered Sutala with the asuras. The illustrious one satisfied Aditi and handed over heaven to Indra, who ruled the entire universe according to his wishes. Prahlada heard how his grandson and descendant, Bali, had been freed and had obtained the favours. Filled with devotion, Prahlada

said, “Virinchi, Shri or Sharva [1060] have never obtained such a favour, not to speak of others. You have become the protector of the fortresses of the asuras. Your feet are worshipped by all those who are worshipped in the world. O one who grants refuge! Your lotus feet are served by Brahma and the others and they obtain your benedictions. We are wicked in conduct and belong to a deceitful species. Because of your compassionate glances, we have obtained this status. Your deeds are wonderful. Your yoga maya is infinite. You are accomplished and, in your pastimes, have created the worlds. You are in all atmans and are impartial towards everyone. Though you love your devotees, your nature is not partial. Your nature is like that of a tree that grants all the objects of desire.” The illustrious one replied, “O child! O Prahlada! May you be fortunate. Go to your abode in Sutala. Find delight and happiness with your own grandson and relatives. You will always see me stationed there, with a club in my hand. The great bliss of seeing me will destroy all the bonds of karma.” O king! With his hands joined in salutation, Prahlada, unblemished in his wisdom, agreed and accepted the illustrious one’s command on his head, along with Bali. The lord of all the armies of the asuras [1061] circumambulated the original being. Bowing down and taking his permission, he entered that giant hole.

‘O king! Ushanas was nearby, seated amidst the officiating priests and the assistant priests who knew about the brahman. Hari Narayana spoke to him. “O brahmana! Please describe the error in the rites undertaken by your disciple, the performer of the sacrifice. If there are any transgressions in the rites, the moment a brahmana looks at them, they are rectified.” Shukra replied, “How can there be a transgression in the rites when you are the lord of the rites? You are the lord of sacrifices. You represent the sacrifice, when you are worshipped with proper sentiments. There may have been gaps in mantras, *tantra*s, the time, the place and the objects used as oblations. However, as soon as your name is repeatedly chanted, all those gaps are rectified. O lord! Nevertheless, since you have said it, I must act in accordance with your instruction. Supreme benefit accrues to a person who follows your commands.” Having honoured Hari’s command, the illustrious Ushanas, along with the other brahmana rishis, rectified the gaps that had

been left in Bali's sacrifice. O king! In this way, as vamana, Hari begged the earth from Bali. He gave his brother, the great Indra, heaven, which had been taken away from him by the enemy. The lord vamana did this for the welfare of all creatures and to please Brahma, the lord of Prajapatis, the gods, rishis, ancestors, lords of the earth, [1062] Daksha, Bhrigu, Angiras, Kumara, Bhava, Kashyapa, Aditi, the worlds and the guardians of the worlds. O king! Upendra was thought of as the lord of the Vedas, all the gods, dharma, fame, prosperity, everything auspicious, the vows, kalpas, heaven, emancipation and every other purpose. All the creatures were extremely delighted at this. With Brahma's permission, Indra and the gods, accompanied by the guardians of the world, placed vamana at their head. On a celestial vehicle, they conveyed him to heaven. Protected by Upendra's arms, Indra obtained the three worlds. He was filled with supreme prosperity and, free of his fear, rejoiced. O king! Brahma, Sharva, Kumara, Bhrigu and the other sages, the ancestors, all the creatures, the Siddhas and those who were on vimanas chanted about and praised Vishnu's extremely great and extremely wonderful deed, along with Aditi. They then went to their respective abodes. O descendant of the Kuru lineage! I have described everything to you about Urukrama's conduct. Those who hear this are freed from all sin. It is impossible to recount a full measure of Urukrama's glory, any more than a mortal person can count the number of particles of dust on earth. "Has such a person been born, or will he be born in the future?" In a mantra, a rishi asked this about Purusha. [1063] If a person hears about this extraordinary deed of Hari, the god of the gods, and about his conduct as an avatara, he goes to the supreme destination. When this is recounted when rites are performed for gods, ancestors or men, the learned say that the rite has been performed well.'

Chapter 8(24)

The king asked, 'O illustrious one! I wish to hear the account of the first avatara of Hari, the performer of wonderful deeds. That is when he used his

maya to assume the form of a fish. The form of a fish is condemned by the world. What is the reason why he assumed this? It is said to be contemptible and represents tamas by nature. Why did the lord do this? O illustrious one! You should tell us everything, exactly as it happened. Uttamashloka's conduct brings happiness to all the worlds.'

Suta said, 'Vishnurata asked Badarayana's illustrious son this and he spoke about Vishnu's conduct and about why he had assumed the form of a fish.'

Shuka replied, 'For the sake of protecting cattle, brahmanas, the gods, the virtuous and the metres and for the sake of dharma and artha, the lord assumed this form. Like the air, the lord moves among superior and inferior creatures. He is nirguna and is not affected by the gunas, even if he adopts a superior or inferior form. O king! At the end of the last kalpa, at the end of Brahma's day, there was a periodic destruction. The earth and other worlds were inundated by the ocean. The powerful creator succumbed to time and looked for a place to sleep. At that time, Hayagriva emerged from his mouth and coming close to him, stole the Vedas. The illustrious lord Hari got to know what Hayagriva, Indra among danavas, was trying to do. He assumed the form of a small and shiny fish. [1064] At that time, there was a great royal sage named Satyavrata. He was devoted to Narayana and tormented himself through austerities, surviving on water. He was Vivasvat's son and in this great kalpa, Hari made him the Manu. He is known by the name of Shraddhadeva. Once, in the Kritamala river, [1065] he was performing water rites and offering oblations of water. The *shaphari* fish appeared in the water in the cup of his hands. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The lord of Dravida offered oblations along with the shaphari that was in the cup of his hands and released it in the waters of the river. In piteous tones, the fish spoke to that extremely compassionate king. "O one who is kind towards the distressed! I am miserable. There are aquatic creatures who kill those who belong to their own species. O king! I am terrified. Why are you releasing me into the river's waters?" He did not know who it was who had assumed the form of the fish. To show it his favours, he happily made up his mind to save the shaphari. The lord of the earth heard its piteous words.

Compassionate, he brought it to his hermitage and placed it in a pot filled with water. Within one night, it had grown inside that kamandalu. Without any space to move, it spoke to the lord of the earth. “It is difficult to live inside the kamandalu. I do not like this. Think of an extremely large body of water, where I can live happily.” He took it from there and flung it inside a well filled with water. Within a muhurta, it increased to a length of three cubits. “O king! This body of water is not sufficient for me to live happily. I have sought refuge with you. Find a larger residence for me.” O king! The king picked it up and flung it into a pond. Covering that entire expanse, it grew into a large fish. “O king! I am an aquatic creature and I am not at ease in this water. It is better to save me by placing me in a lake with unlimited water.” Thus addressed, he took the fish to a lake with unlimited supply of water. When each reservoir of water proved to be limited, [1066] he flung the fish into the ocean. As it was being flung there, it said, “O brave one! There are makaras and other creatures there. They are extremely strong and will eat me up. You should not throw me into this.” Confounded by these words, he asked, “Who are you? Who has adopted this form of a fish to confound me? We have never seen, or heard of, such kinds of powers in aquatic creatures. You have covered a lake that extends for one hundred yojanas in a single day. O supreme being! I bow down to you. You are the lord of creation, preservation and destruction. O lord! You are foremost among those whom devotees approach. You are the destination of the atman. All your pastimes and avataras are for the sake of the welfare of creatures. I wish to know the reason why you have assumed this form. O lotus-eyed one! Worshipping your feet cannot be futile. You are the beloved atman and a well-wisher towards everyone. Virtuous ones like us, who still possess a sense of duality in their atmans, have been able to see you.” At the end of the yuga, the lord of the universe had assumed the form of a fish, desiring to sport in the ocean of destruction. Addressed by the king, desiring to do good to those whom he loves, he spoke to the beloved Satyavrata.

‘The illustrious one said, “O destroyer of enemies! On the seventh day from now, the three worlds, earth, heaven and the intervening space between them, will be submerged in the ocean of destruction. When the three

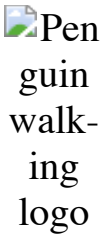
worlds are immersed in that ocean of destruction, sent by me, a giant boat will present itself before you. Ascend that giant boat with all the plants and seeds, inferior and superior and with all kinds of living beings, surrounded by the saptarshis. In it, in that dark and undivided ocean, you will be able to roam easily, because of the radiance of the rishis. The boat will be tossed around by strong winds. But I will present myself. Use the giant serpent [1067] to tie it to my horn. O lord! As long as Brahma's night lasts, I will roam around, dragging the boat in the deluge, with you and the rishis in it. Because of my favours, my greatness and what is spoken about as the supreme brahman, and all questions about this, will become known to your hearts."'

Shuka continued, 'Having instructed the king in this way, Hari vanished. He waited for the time that Hrishikesha had instructed him about. The royal sage spread darbha grass, with the blades pointing towards the east, and sat facing the north-east. Seating himself, he thought of Hari's feet, who had assumed the form of the fish. The ocean became turbulent and flooded the ground on all sides. Giant clouds, about to shower down, were seen to increase in size. As he meditated on the illustrious one's commands, he saw the boat arrive. With the Indras among the brahmanas, and gathering plants and herbs, he ascended it. Delighted, the sages said, "O king! Meditate on Keshava. He will save us from this catastrophe and ensure our well-being." As the king meditated in this way, in that great ocean, a fish manifested itself. It was golden in complexion and was one million yojanas long. It was golden in complexion. As instructed by Hari earlier, he tied the boat to its horn, using the excellent serpent. Having satisfied himself in this way, he praised Madhusudana. The king said, "Since the beginning, ignorance, which is the root of samsara, efforts and affliction, has been destroyed by knowledge about the atman. You are our supreme preceptor. As you will, you can relieve us from that and bestow emancipation on us. Ignorant people are bound down by the bondage of their karma. Desiring happiness, they conceive karma, but that brings unhappiness. If the intelligence turns towards serving you, you destroy and sever the bondage that is in the heart. You are our preceptor. Your service is like a fire that purifies a lump of precious metal. A person can thereby give up the impurities in his atman and

the tamas in his mind. He regains his own original complexion and undecaying form again. You are the supreme lord. You are the preceptor of all preceptors. I think that the gods, preceptors and people, individually or acting collectively, do not possess even a ten thousandth part of Purusha's favours and powers. You are the lord and I seek refuge with you. A man without eyes asks a blind man to lead him. Like that, ignorant people seek out ignorant preceptors. Your vision is like that of the sun. You see everything. You are a witness to everything. For our own deliverance, we have sought you out as a preceptor. A person [1068] instructs people about wrong methods, whereby they are immersed in a darkness that is extremely difficult to cross. You are without decay. Through you, a person can quickly obtain the infallible knowledge with which he can obtain his own state. You are a well-wisher to all the worlds. You are the beloved lord. You are the atman. You are the preceptor. You are knowledge. You are the desired success. Nevertheless, because they are blind in their intelligence and bound to desire, people do not know you, although you are inside their hearts. You are the supreme divinity. You are the one who should be worshipped. O lord! For the sake of my awakening, I seek refuge with you. O illustrious one! Use the lamp of your words to sever everything futile, the bondage of the heart. Explain your own self to me." The king addressed the illustrious and original being in this way. In the form of a fish, he was roaming around in that ocean of destruction. He spoke to him about the truth. In particular, he told Satyavrata, the royal sage, about the divine compilation of the Puranas, samkhya, yoga, the rites and the mysteries of the atman. Seated on the boat along with the rishis, he heard what the illustrious one said about the eternal brahman, and all his doubts about the truth of the atman were dispelled. When the deluge was over, Brahma awoke. Hari slew the asura Hayagriva and returned the Vedas to him. King Satyavrata acquired jnana and vijnana. Because of Vishnu's favours, in this kalpa, he became Vaivasvata Manu. If a person hears the description of the great account about the royal sage Satyavrata and the one who used his maya to assume the form of the fish with the horn, the person is freed from all sins. If a man recites the account of Hari's avatara every day, all his resolutions are successful and he

goes to the supreme destination. Brahma was asleep in the water of destruction and all his powers were dormant. Diti's son emerged and stole the sacred texts from his mouths. The cause behind everything assumed the form of a fish and killed him, explaining the brahman to Satyavrata and the others. I bow down before him.'

This ends the Eighth Skandha.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Ninth Skandha

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Chapter 9(1)

The king said, 'I have heard what you have said about all the manvantaras and the glorious deeds that the infinitely valorous Hari undertook in those. There was a royal sage named Satyavrata, the lord of the Dravidas. At the end of the last kalpa, by serving Purusha, he obtained knowledge. I have heard that this son of Vivasvat became a Manu. You have also said that Ikshvaku and the other foremost kings were his sons. O brahmana! O immensely fortunate one! We are always eager to hear. Please tell us about their separate lineages and the conduct of those who belonged to those lineages. Tell us everything about their sacred deeds and valour, about those who were there in the past, about those who will be there in the future and about those who are there in the present.'

Suta said, 'In the assembly of those who knew about the brahman, King Parikshit thus asked the illustrious Shuka, who knew about supreme dharma.'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'O scorcher of enemies! Hear from me the main aspects about Manu's lineage. Even if I speak for one hundred years, I am incapable of stating it in detail. The supreme Purusha is in the atmans of all creatures, superior and inferior. At the end of the kalpa, the universe did not exist. Nor was there anything else. A golden lotus with a filament sprouted from his navel. O great king! Svayambhu, with the four faces, was generated from this. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Marichi was born from his mental powers. Kashyapa was born from Marichi. Through Daksha's daughter, Aditi, Vivasvat was born as Kashyapa's son. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Manu Shraddhadeva was born from Vivasvat and Samjna. Through Shraddha, [1069] Shraddhadeva, who knew about the atman, had ten sons—Ikshvaku, Nriga, Sharyati, Dishta, Dhrishta, Karusha, Narishyanta, Prishadhra, Nabhaga and the lord Kavi. Earlier, when Manu did not have any offspring, for the sake of offspring, the lord made the illustrious Vasishtha perform a sacrifice to Mitra and Varuna. Manu's wife, Shraddha, was observing payovrata. For the sake of a daughter, she approached the hotri and bowed down before him. [1070] Asked by the advaryu, the hotri controlled himself and picked up the oblations. The brahmana offered these to

the chant of *vashatkara*. However, because of the hotri's transgression, a daughter named Ila resulted. [1071] On seeing her, Manu was dissatisfied in his mind and spoke to his preceptor. "O illustrious one! All of you know about the brahman. How has she been born then? Alas! This is a calamity and when a rite is being performed in the name of the brahman, this transgression should not have happened. All of you know about the brahman and are full of austerities. You have burnt down all your sins. Like the gods, your pronouncements are never false. What is the cause behind this deviation in your determination?" Hearing these words, the illustrious great-grandfather [1072] got to know about the hotri's transgression. He spoke to Ravi's son. [1073] "This is because the hotri committed a transgression. There has been a consequent deviation in the determination. However, using my own energy, I shall ensure that you have an excellent son." O king! The illustrious and extremely famous one made this decision. Desiring a son, he prayed to the original Purusha so that Ila might become a man. The illustrious lord, Hari, was satisfied and granted him the desired boon. Because of that boon, Ila became Sudyumna, bull among men. O great king! Once, he was wandering around in the forest on a hunt. He was astride a horse from the Sindhu region [1074] and was surrounded by a few advisers. He seized a beautiful bow and extremely wonderful arrows and was armoured. Following a deer, the valiant one headed in a northern direction. He entered a beautiful forest on the foothills of Meru. With Uma, the illustrious Sharva was sporting himself there. Sudyumna, the slayer of enemy heroes, entered that spot. O king! He saw that he himself had become a woman and his horse had become a mare. All his followers also saw that their genders had got changed. They were dejected in their minds and glanced at each other.'

The king asked, 'O illustrious one! How did that region come to possess such qualities and who brought this about? Please answer this question. We have a great curiosity.'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'Once, the rishis, excellent in their vows, went there to see Girisha. They arrived there, illuminating all the directions with their radiance. The goddess Ambika was nude then and was extremely ashamed to see them. She arose from her husband's lap and quickly covered herself

with her lower garment. On seeing that the two of them were engaged in sexual pleasures, the rishis withdrew and went to the hermitage of Nara and Narayana. Desiring to bring pleasure to his beloved, the illustrious one spoke to his beloved. "Anyone who enters this place will become a woman." Since that time, every man has avoided that forest. However, followed by her advisers, she [1075] roamed around, from that forest to another forest. The illustrious Budha saw that excellent woman roaming around near his hermitage, surrounded by women, and was smitten by desire. The one with the excellent eyebrows also wanted to have the son of King Soma as her husband. Through her, he gave birth to a son named Pururava. O king! We have heard that having become a woman, Manu's son, Sudyumna, remembered Vasishtha, the preceptor of their lineage. He saw her in that difficult state and was filled with great compassion. Desiring that Sudyumna should become a man again, he worshipped Shankara. O lord of the earth! Satisfied with the rishi, the illustrious one wanted to give him pleasure, but he did not wish to render his own words false. He said, "Sudyumna, who has been descended from your gotra, will be a man for one month and a woman for another month. In this way, as he wills, let him protect the earth." Through this means and through his preceptor's favours, he fulfilled his desire of becoming a man. He ruled the world, though the subjects did not like the idea. O king! He had three sons, Utkala, Gaya and Vimala. They were devoted to dharma and became kinds of *dakshinapatha*. [1076] When he aged, the lord who was the king of Pratishthana [1077] left for the forest, handing over the earth to his son, Pururava.'

Chapter 9(2)

Shri-Shuka said, 'When his son Sudyumna left in this way, Vaivasvata Manu [1078] desired sons. On the banks of the Yamuna, he tormented himself through austerities for one hundred years. For the sake of offspring, he worshipped the divinity, lord Hari, and obtained ten sons who were just like him. Ikshvaku was the eldest. His preceptor asked Manu's son, Prishadhra,

to look after the cattle. Thus, he would spend the night in the vow of *virasana*, [1079] tending to the cattle. Once, in the night, when it was raining, a tiger entered the pen meant for cattle. The cows that were asleep were terrified and it got them running around here and there in the area. The powerful one [1080] seized a cow and, afflicted by fear, it started to shriek. Hearing the scream, Prishadhra followed the sound. When the stars were covered by clouds, in the night, he quickly seized his sword. In his ignorance, taking the cow's head to be that of the tiger's, he severed it. However, the tiger's ear was also lopped off by the sharp sword. It fled in great fear, shedding drops of blood along the path. Prishadhra, the slayer of enemy heroes, thought that he had killed the tiger. However, when the night was over, he saw that he had killed the cow and was miserable. Although he had commited the crime innocently, the preceptor of the lineage [1081] cursed him. "Because of this sin, you won't be reborn as a kshatra-bandhu, but as a shudra." When he was cursed by his preceptor in this way, he accepted it, with his hands joined in salutation. The brave one adopted the vow of holding up his seed, so loved by sages. With all his soul, he was devoted to the illustrious one who is in all atmans and is supreme and unblemished. He was full of single-minded faith towards him. He was impartial and a friend towards all creatures. He was free of attachment and tranquil in his atman. He was restrained in vision and did not accept anything from anyone. He sustained himself on the basis of whatever came to him, of its own accord. He fixed his atman on the atman. [1082] He was controlled and content in his knowledge. Assuming the form of a person who was blind, deaf and dumb, he roamed around on earth. Conducting himself in this way, he went to a forest and saw that a forest conflagration was raging. The sage took this as an opportunity to burn himself up and obtained the supreme brahman. The youngest, Kavi, was indifferent towards material objects. He gave up the kingdom, and with his relatives, retired to the forest. He immersed his mind in the self-luminiscent Purusha. Though he had still not attained youth, he obtained the supreme.

'From Karusha, Manu's son, were born the Karusha kshatriyas. They were devoted to brahmanas and dharma and protected *uttarapatha*. [1083] The

Dhrishtas were born from Dhrishta. Though they were born as kshatriya*s*, they became brahmanas on earth. Sumati was born in Nriga's lineage. Sumati's son was Bhutajyoti and Bhutajyoti's son was Vasu. Vasu's son was Pratika and Pratika's son was Oghavan. Oghavan was the father of Oghavat and a daughter named Oghavati, who was married to Sudarshana. Narishyanta's son was Chitrasena and Chitrasena had a son named Riksha. Riksha's son was Midhvan, Midhvan's son was Kurcha and Kurcha's son was Indrasena. Indrasena's son was Vitihotra and Vitihotra's son was Satyashrava. Satyashrava's son was Urushrava and Urushrava's son was Devadatta. Devadatta's son was Agniveshya, who was none other than the illustrious Agni himself. This great rishi was also famous as Kanina and Jatukarnya. O king! The brahmana lineage known as Agniveshyana was descended from Agniveshya. I have spoken about Narishyanta's descendants. Now hear about Dishta's lineage. Nabhaga was Dishta's son. However, because he followed a different kind of conduct, he became a vaishya. His son was Bhalandana and Bhalandana's son was Vatsapriti. Vatsapriti's son was Pramshu and Pramshu's son was known as Pramati. Pramati's son was Khanitra, Khanitra's son was Chakshusha and Chakshusha's son was Vivimshati. Vivimshati's son was Rambha and Rambha's son was Khaninetra, devoted to dharma. O great king! O king! Karandhama was Khaninetra's son. Karandhama's son was Avikshit and Avikshit's son was Marutta, who became an emperor. [1084] The great yogi, Samvarta, the son of Angiras made him undertake a sacrifice. No one else has ever undertaken a sacrifice like that of Marutta. Every object was made out of gold. Everything was beautiful. Having drunk a lot of soma, Indra was intoxicated. The brahmanas were satisfied with dakshina. Marutta offered food to all the Vishvadevas who were part of the assembly. Marutta's son was Dama and Dama's son was Rajyavardhana. His son was Sudhriti and Nara was born as Sudhriti's son. Nara's son was Kevala, Kevala's son was Bandhuman and Banduman's son was Vegavan. Bandhu was Vegavan's son and Bandhu's son was King Trinabindu. As a store of qualities, he deserved to be worshipped. Therefore, the divine apsara, Alambusha, served him and gave birth to sons. She also had Ilavila as a daughter. Through her, Vishrava had

Dhanada [1085] as a son. From his father, the supreme rishi who was the lord of yoga, he [1086] obtained knowledge. His [1087] sons were Vishala, Shunyabandhu and Dhumraketu. King Vishala set up the lineage of Vishala and constructed the city of Vaishali. His [1088] son was Hemachandra and Hemachandra's son was Dhumraksha. Dhumraksha's son was Samyama and Samyama's sons were Krishashva and Devaja. Somadatta was Krishashva's son. He was a king who performed horse sacrifices and worshipped the foremost Purusha, the lord of yoga, obtaining the supreme destination. Somadatta's son was Sumati and Sumati's son was Janamejaya. The kings of Vishala were the ones who sustained Trinabindu's fame.'

Chapter 9(3)

Shri-Shuka continued, 'King Sharyati, Manu's son, was full of knowledge about the brahman. In a sacrifice performed by those of the Angiras lineage, he is the one who explained the rituals to be followed on the second day of the sacrifice. He had a lotus-eyed daughter named Sukanya. Having gone to the forest with her, he went to Chyavana's hermitage. Surrounded by her friends, she searched amongst the trees in the forest. In a termite hill, she saw two holes that gleamed like fireflies. Goaded by destiny, the maiden poked those shining holes with a thorn. When she pierced them in her ignorance, blood flowed out. [1089] Immediately, all the soldiers could no longer pass urine or excrement. On seeing that his men were in this state, the royal sage was surprised. He asked, "Has anyone among you caused any harm to the one from Bhrigu's lineage? It is evident that someone must have defiled his hermitage." Sukanya was scared and told her father, "I have done something. There were two shining objects. In my ignorance, I pierced them with a thorn." Hearing his daughter's words, Sharyati was terrified. The sage was inside the termite hill and he tried to gently assuage him. Understanding what the sage wanted, he bestowed his daughter on him. Having been freed from his hardship in this way, he took his [1090] permission and returned to his city. Sukanya obtained Chyavana, who was extremely prone to anger, as her

husband. She pleased him and understanding his wishes, always followed him, without getting distracted.

'After some time, the two Nasatyas [1091] arrived in the hermitage. After worshipping them, he said, "O lords! Grant me young age. Though you are not entitled to drink soma at sacrifices, I will give you a pot full of soma. But grant me the youth and beauty that women desire." Those two excellent physicians honoured the brahmana and agreed. They said, "Immerse yourself in this lake. It has been constructed by the Siddhas." He was old and his veins were visible. His skin was shrivelled and his hair was grey. The two Ashvins seized this body and immersed it in the lake. Three handsome men arose, with forms loved by women. They wore garlands of lotuses and earrings. They were attired in excellent garments and they were identical to each other in form. They were as radiant as the sun and similar in beauty. On seeing them, the beautiful and virtuous lady could not identify her husband. She sought refuge with the two Ashvins. Satisfied with her devotion to her husband, they pointed out her husband to her. Taking leave of the rishi, they went to heaven in a vimana. Wishing to perform a sacrifice, Sharyati went to Chyavana's hermitage. He saw his daughter, alongside a man who was as radiant as the sun. When his daughter honoured his feet, the king did not offer her blessings. Instead, he seemed to be displeased with her. "What do you want to do? Your husband is a sage who is revered by the worlds, but you have cheated him. O evil one! Because he was old and not attractive, you have abandoned him and are serving a lover you picked up along the way. You have been born in a noble and virtuous lineage! How can you harbour such intentions? You have acted in a perverse way and have defiled the lineage. You are shamelessly serving a lover. You have flung downwards the lineages of your father and your husband." Addressed by her father in this way, the one with the beautiful smiles smiled. She said, "O father! This is your son-in-law, the descendant of the Bhrigu lineage." She told her father everything about how he had got back his youth and beauty. He was astounded and with great affection, embraced his daughter. Chyavana made the brave one perform a soma sacrifice. The two Ashvins were not meant to drink soma. However, using his own energy, he

gave them a pot of soma. Indra became filled with rage and intolerance and instantly raised his vajra, so as to kill him. But Bhargava paralysed his arm, along with the vajra. The two Ashvins were physicians and had formerly been barred from obtaining a share of the soma oblations. However, thereafter, everyone granted them a pot of soma.

'Sharyati had three sons—Uttanabarhi, Anarta and Bhurishena. Anarta's son was Revata. In the middle of the ocean, he built the city of Kushasthali. O destroyer of enemies! He resided there, enjoying the kingdoms of Anarta and similar areas. He had one hundred excellent sons and the eldest was Kakudmi. Taking his daughter Revati with him, Kakudmi went to Brahma's world, the doors to which were open then. He wished to ask the lord about an excellent groom for his daughter. At that time, a performance by the gandharvas was going on and he did not get an opportunity. When it ended, he told the original being about his intention. Hearing this, the illustrious Brahma laughed and told him, "O king! Those you thought of have been swallowed by time a long time ago. We no longer hear about their sons, grandsons, great grandsons and gotras. Twenty-seven cycles of the four yugas have passed in the intervening period. Leave this place. O king! There is the immensely strong Baladeva, a gem among men and born as a portion of the god of the gods. Bestow this gem of a daughter on him. The illustrious one, the creator of creatures has descended on earth to reduce its burden. His account is auspicious to hear. His own portion has taken the form of an avatara." Having been commanded in this way, the king honoured Aja and returned to his own city. He saw that his brothers had abandoned it and fled in different directions because of their fear of yakshas. [1092] He bestowed his daughter, unblemished in her limbs, on the powerful Bala. The king then went to Narayana's hermitage of Badari, to torment himself through austerities.'

Chapter 9(4)

Shri-Shuka said, 'The wise Nabhaga was the son of Nabhaga [1093] and he was the youngest among his brothers. When he returned after having been a brahmachari, he found that the ancestral property had been divided up. He asked, "O brothers! What have you left as my share?" [1094] They said, "Our father is your share." He said, "My seniors have given you as my share," and his father replied, "O son! Ignore what they have said. The extremely intelligent descendants of Angiras are performing a sacrifice now. O wise one! On every sixth day, they will be confused about the rites that have to be performed. Instruct those great-souled ones about the two *sukta*s to the Vishvadevas. [1095] When the sacrifice is over and they go to heaven, they will give all the remaining riches to you. Therefore, go there and honour them." He acted accordingly. When they went to heaven, they gave him the left-over wealth from the sacrifice. As he was about to accept this, a man, dark in complexion, arrived from the northern direction and said, "This wealth and everything that remains is mine." Manu's descendant replied, "Everything left from the sacrifice is mine. It has been given to me by the rishis." "Go and ask your father," was the response. He went and asked his father. His father replied, "On one occasion, the rishis said that everything left over from a sacrifice was Rudra's share. Therefore, everything should be offered to that god." Nabhaga bowed down before him and said, "O lord! Everything in this arena is indeed yours. O brahmana! This is what my father said. I am bowing down my head and seek your favours." Rudra replied, "What your father said is dharma and you have also spoken the truth. I am the lord of mantras and I will bestow on you knowledge about the eternal brahman. Accept these riches, left over from the sacrifice. I am giving these to you." Saying this, the illustrious Rudra, devoted to dharma, disappeared. If one controls oneself and remembers this in the morning and in the evening, he becomes wise and knowledgeable about mantras and knows the atman's destination. Ambarisha was born from Nabhaga and he was greatly devoted to the illustrious one. Though he was cursed by a brahmana, that curse was unable to touch him.'

The king asked, ‘O illustrious one! I wish to hear about the intelligent royal sage. How was he freed from a brahmana’s curse, which is so very difficult to overcome?’

Shri-Shuka continued, ‘The immensely fortunate Ambarisha inherited the earth with its seven dvipas and obtained inexhaustible prosperity and unmatched wealth on earth. Though all this was extremely difficult for men to get, he thought that this was like something obtained in a dream. He knew that prosperity is destroyed and that it leads a man into darkness. He was devoted to the illustrious Vasudeva and also to his virtuous devotees. He obtained the supreme sentiment that has been stated—the universe is just like a lump of earth. His mind was on Krishna’s lotus feet. His words recounted Vaikuntha’s qualities. He used his hand to clean Hari’s temple and other such things. His ears heard Achyuta’s sacred accounts. His eyes were engaged in seeing abodes where Mukunda’s signs existed. [1096] His sense of touch was used for embracing and touching his servants. His sense of smell inhaled the fragrance of the lotus on his feet. His sense of taste was rendered to the beautiful tulasi. His feet followed kshetras where Hari’s feet had gone. His head bowed down at Hrishikesha’s feet. He did not wish to pursue desire and his desire was on this service. He was attached to people who had sought refuge with Uttamashloka. In this way, all his acts and he himself were always rendered to the supreme lord, the illustrious Adhokshaja. He behaved as if everything on earth was like his own atman. He ruled according to the instructions of brahmanas who were devoted to him. [1097] He performed extremely expensive horse sacrifices, with all the associated parts, to the lord who rules over sacrifices and offered appropriate dakshina to Vasishtha, Asita, Goutama and others. He performed these in a place known as Dhanva, where the flow of the Sarasvati was the reverse. [1098] Gods, priests, officiating priests and people were seen at these sacrifices, attired excellently and their forms were so similar that they did not seem to blink. [1099] His men did not desire heaven, so loved by the immortals. Instead, they heard and chanted about Uttamashloka’s exploits. Their own kingdom was flooded with prosperity that was difficult for the Siddhas to get. Even then, since they perceived Mukunda in their hearts, their wishes

were satiated. In this way, the king combined bhakti yoga with austerities. He followed his own dharma and pleased Hari. Slowly, he abandoned all kinds of desire. Houses, wives, sons, relatives, the best of elephants, chariots, horses, objects, inexhaustible jewels, ornaments, garments and the unlimited treasury—his mind came to regard all these as unreal. Pleased with his single-minded devotion and to protect his devotee, Hari gave him his chakra, which is so fearful to rival armies. His queen was similar in good conduct. To worship Krishna, along with her, the brave one observed the vow of *dvadashi* [1100] for one year. On such an occasion, at the end of the vow in the month of Kartika, having fasted for three nights, he bathed in Kalindi and worshipped Hari in Madhuvana. [1101] Following the rituals, with all the required objects, he performed *mahabhisheka*, [1102] using garments, ornaments, fragrances, garlands and other articles of worship. His mind filled with devotion, he worshipped Keshava and also faithfully worshipped the immensely fortunate brahmanas who had attained all their objectives. He sent six hundred million cows to the houses of virtuous brahmanas. Their horns were encrusted with gold and their hooves covered with silver. They were covered with excellent garments. They were milk-yielding and young and beautiful. He gave these away, along with their calves and other equipment. [1103] He fed the foremost brahmanas excellent and tasty food. After their desires had been satisfied, he obtained their permission to complete the vow. [1104]

'At that time, the illustrious Durvasa himself arrived there as an unexpected guest. The king got up and worshipped the guest with a seat and objects of welcome. Having approached his feet, he requested him to eat. He [1105] welcomed the idea and went away to the auspicious waters of the Kalindi to perform the necessary ablutions. Having submerged himself there, he meditated on the great being. There was only half a muhurta left for the vow of dvadashi to be completed. The one who knew about dharma started to think. [1106] Faced with this conflict of dharma, he consulted the brahmanas. "There is a sin in crossing a brahmana and also in not completing the dvadashi vow. What is virtuous for me, so that adharma does not touch me? Shall I complete the vow by only drinking some water? O brahmanas!

Surely, drinking water amounts to both eating and not eating." Thus, the royal sage drank some water. He thought about Achyuta in his mind. O best among the Kuru lineage! He then waited for the brahmana to return. Having performed the necessary ablutions, Durvasa returned from the banks of the Yamuna. Though the king greeted him, using his intelligence, he could discern what he had done. His body trembled in rage and the eyebrows on his face were furrowed. He spoke to the extremely hungry one, who stood before him with his hands joined in salutation. "Alas! Behold this cruel one. He has been maddened by his prosperity. This insolent person is not actually Vishnu's devotee and has caused a transgression of dharma. I am a guest and he offered hospitality to the guest. However, you have eaten without giving me anything. You will instantly behold the fruits of this." Having said this, he blazed in rage and plucked out a strand from his matted hair. Using this, he created an ogress that was like the fire of destruction. With a flaming sword, she descended on him and her steps made the earth tremble. The king looked at her, but did not stir a foot. The great-souled being had already instructed his chakra to protect his devotee and this burnt down the ogress, just as a fire consumes an angry snake. Durvasa saw that his own efforts had been futile. Terrified, to save his life, he fled in different directions. Just as the flames of a blazing forest conflagration pursue a snake, the illustrious one's chakra followed him. The sage saw that it was about to touch him. Moving swiftly, he sought to enter one of Meru's caverns. He fled in the directions, the sky, the surface of the earth, nether regions, oceans, to the guardians of the worlds and to heaven. However, wherever he went, the extremely invincible Sudarshana could be seen. He was unable to find a protector anywhere. Terrified in his mind, he searched for a protector. He went to the creator, the divinity Virinchi and said, "O self-born one! Save me from this invincible energy." Brahma replied, "My status and this universe is because of him. He ends his pastimes at the end of two parardhas. Time is his soul and through a mere contraction of his eyebrows, all this is destroyed. I, Bhava, Daksha, Bhrigu, the foremost lords of subjects, the lords of bhutas and the best among the lords of the gods—all of us follow his rules and seek refuge with him. For the welfare of the worlds, we

uphold his rules on our heads." Tormented by Vishnu's chakra and refused by Virinchi, Durvasa went to Sharva, who resided on Kailasa and sought refuge with him. The illustrious Rudra replied, "O son! Against the lord, we do not possess any powers. Not to speak of others, Aja and worlds with their creatures, are mere parts of the supreme one. We are here. But at the right time, we will no longer be here like this. There are thousands like us, just being whirled around. I, Sanatkumara, the illustrious Aja, Kapila, Apantaratma, [1107] Devala, Dharma, Asuri, Marichi and other foremost lords among the Siddhas who are accomplished about the ultimate—all of us are enveloped in his maya and are unable to comprehend his maya. He is the lord of the universe and his weapon cannot be tolerated by us. Go and seek refuge with Hari. He will arrange for your welfare." Having failed in his wish, Durvasa went to the illustrious one's abode, known as Vaikuntha. The prosperous one resides there with Shri. He was scorched by the flames of the invincible weapon. Trembling all over his body, he fell down at his feet. He said, "O infinite Achyuta! You are the lord desired by virtuous ones. O creator of the universe! I have committed a sin. Save me. I did not know about your supreme powers. I committed a crime against someone you love. Tell me how my sin can be atoned for. If one utters your name, one is saved even from hell." The illustrious one replied, "O brahmana! I am not independent and am completely controlled by my devotees. I am loved by those who are devoted to me and thus my heart is attached to those foremost among virtuous ones. Without those virtuous ones who are devoted to me, I do not wish for anything for myself. O brahmana! I am their supreme destination and I do not even crave for Shri, who is extremely close to me. They have given up their wives, homes, sons, relatives, lives and this supreme prosperity [1108] and have sought refuge with me. How can I be interested in abandoning them? Those virtuous ones are impartial in their vision and their hearts are bound to me. Just as a virtuous wife does to a husband, they have brought me under their control. By serving me, they have already obtained the four objectives, *salokya* and the others. [1109] They are completely fulfilled with this service and do not wish for anything else, not to speak of other things that are destroyed by time. The virtuous person is in my heart

and I am in the heart of the virtuous person. They do not know anything other than me and other than them, there is nothing else in my mind. O brahmana! I will tell you about a means. Listen to it. You should quickly go to the person you have acted against. If energy is unleashed against a virtuous person, that brings something inauspicious to the striker. Austerities and learning are both for the welfare of brahmanas. However, if used by a person who is indisciplined, they can bring about perverse consequences. O brahmana! O fortunate one! Therefore, go to the king who is Nabhaga's son. Ask the immensely fortunate one to forgive you. That is how there will be peace for you."'

Chapter 9(5)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Durvasa was scorched by the chakra. Having been instructed by the illustrious one, he went to Ambarisha and miserably touched his feet. When he [1110] saw that his feet was being touched, he was ashamed. Overwhelmed by great compassion, he prayed to Hari's weapon. Ambarisha said, "You are the illustrious Agni, Surya and Soma, the lord of the stellar bodies. You are water, earth, sky, air, the objects of the senses and the senses. O Sudarshana! O one with one thousand spokes! I bow down before you. You are loved by Achyuta. O destroyer of all weapons! O lord of the earth! May the brahmana be safe. You are dharma. You are ritam. You are satyam. You are the sacrifice. You are the enjoyer of all sacrifices. You are the guardian of the worlds. You are in all atmans. You are the energy of the supreme Purusha. O one with the excellent nave. I bow down before you. You are all the ordinances of dharma. For asuras, who follow adharma in their conduct, you are like a comet. [1111] You are the protector of the three worlds. You are full of pure resplendence. You are as swift as thought. You are extraordinary in your deeds. I praise you. [1112] Your energy is full of dharma. It dispels darkness and provides illumination to the directions and to the great-souled ones. O lord of speech! Your greatness is impossible to grasp. Your form is in everything that is gross and subtle, superior and infe-

rior. O one who cannot be vanquished! When you are released by the one without any blemish, you penetrate the armies of the daityas and the danavas. Having severed their arms, stomachs, thighs, feet and heads, you are radiant in the field of battle. O protector of the universe! O destroyer of the deceitful! You can withstand everything and have been invoked by the wielder of the club. For the sake of the brahmana and for the sake of our lineage, do what is auspicious. Show us your favours. If I have given donations, if I have performed sacrifices, if I have been engaged in my own dharma and if our lineage has looked upon brahmanas as divinities, let this brahmana be free of anxiety. If the illustrious one, who alone is the abode of all the qualities, is pleased because we look upon all creatures as our own self, let this brahmana be free of anxiety." The king thus praised Sudarshana, Vishnu's chakra. Because the king asked, everything became peaceful and the brahmana was no longer scorched. Durvasa was at ease, having been freed from the scorching of the flames of the weapon. He praised the king and pronounced supreme benedictions on him.

'Durvasa said, "I have now witnessed the greatness of those who serve Ananta. O king! Though I caused you an offence, you prayed for my well-being. There is nothing that is difficult for virtuous people to accomplish or for great-souled ones to give up. After all, they have stored up the illustrious Hari, the bull among the Satvatas. A man is purified from merely hearing his name. For servants, who regard his feet as a tirtha, nothing else remains to be done. O king! I have been favoured by you. You have been extremely compassionate towards me. Turning your back on the sin that I had committed, you have protected my life." Wishing to wait for his return, the king had not eaten. He approached his feet, pleased him, and made him eat. He ate and accepted all the hospitality and all the objects of desire that were respectfully offered. After having eaten, he respectfully asked the king to eat. "I am pleased with you. Through my intelligence, I see that you are a devotee of the illustrious one and you have shown me your favours by your sight, your touch, [1113] your conversation and your hospitality. Celestial women will repeatedly chant about this deed of yours. Those on earth will chant about this supremely sacred deed of yours." Durvasa was extremely

satisfied. Having thus praised the king, he took his leave and went to Brahma's world, where there is no place for those who debate unnecessarily. A year passed, but he still did not return. Wishing to see the sage, the king subsisted only on water. [1114] When Durvasa departed, Ambarisha only ate extremely auspicious food that was appropriate for brahmanas. He reflected on the hardship faced by the rishi and his liberation and thought that his entire valour was because of his supreme sentiments. [1115] The king was thus endowed with many kinds of qualities. In his deeds and in his rites, he continued to be extremely devoted to Vasudeva, the paramatman and the brahman. He thought that even going to Virinchi's world was nothing but hell. Hence, the patient Ambarisha handed over his kingdom to his sons, who were like him in conduct. With his atman in Vasudeva, he entered the forest. Focusing his mind, he destroyed the flow of gunas. This is the sacred account of Ambarisha, lord of the earth. If a person chants it, or meditates on it, he becomes a devotee of the illustrious one.'

Chapter 9(6)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Ambarisha had three sons—Virupa, Ketuman and Shambhu. Virupa's son was Prishadashva and Prishadashva's son was Rathitara. Rathitara did not have any offspring. For the sake of offspring, he requested Angiras and through his wife, there were sons who were brahmanas in their radiance. [1116] Though they were born from a kshetra, they were known as the sons of Angiras. Despite being born from the kshetra, they were brahmanas and were foremost among Rathitara's sons. When Manu sneezed, Ikshvaku was a son who was born through his nostrils. Among the one hundred sons of Ikshvaku, Vikukshi, Nimi and Dandaka were the eldest. O king! Among these sons of the king, twenty-five became kings on the eastern side of Aryavarta, twenty-five on the west and three in the centre. The others were kings elsewhere. On one occasion, at the time of an *ashtaka shraddha*, [1117] he instructed his son, "O Vikukshi! Without any delay, go and fetch some proper meat." [1118] Agreeing, he went to the forest.

He hunted animals that were appropriate for the rites. However, the valiant one was tired and hungry. Forgetting that it was meant for a purpose, he ate a hare. He brought the remainder and gave it to his father, who urged the preceptor to purify it. But he [1119] said that it was tainted and could not be used for the rite. From his preceptor, the king got to know what his son had done. Since he had violated the ordinances, he angrily banished his son from the kingdom. Through conversations with the brahmana, he [1120] got to know about what should be done. Like a yogi, he gave up his physical body and obtained the supreme. When his father departed, Vikukshi returned and ruled over the earth. He worshipped Hari and performed sacrifices to him. He was known as Shashada. [1121] His son was Puranjaya, also referred to as Indravaha. He was also known as Kakutstha. Hear how his deeds gave rise to these names. At the end of *krita yuga*, there was a battle between the gods and the danavas. The gods were vanquished by the daityas and accepted the valiant one as an aide on their side. Because of the words of lord Vishnu, the god of the gods and the creator of the universe, Indra agreed to be his mount and assumed the form of a giant bull. [1122] He was astride the hump and armoured. He grasped a divine bow and sharp arrows. Praised, he ascended and fought. The energy of the great-souled Purusha, Vishnu, permeated him. With the gods, he laid siege to the city of the daityas that was in the western direction. There was a tumultuous battle that made the body hair stand up. When daityas approached him in the field of battle, he used iron arrows to convey them to Yama's abode. His fierce arrows were like the fire of destruction that comes at the end of a yuga. When these descended in front of them, the daityas were slaughtered. They gave up the battle and fled to their own homes. He conquered all the enemy's wealth and their women, handing them over to the one with a vajra in his hand. The royal sage thus came to acquire the names mentioned earlier.

'Puranjaya's son was Anena and Anena's son was Prithu. Prithu's son was Vishvarandhi and Vishvarandhi's son was Chandra. Chandra's son was Yuvanashva. Yuvanashva's son was Shabasta and he constructed the city of Shabasti. Shabasta's son was Brihadashva and Brihadashva's son was Kuvalayashva. To bring pleasure to Utanka, [1123] the powerful Kuvalayashva

surrounded himself with twenty-one thousand of his sons and killed the asura Dhundhu. He thus became famous as Dhundhumara. With the exception of three who were left, all his sons were burnt down by the flames that emerged from Dhundhu's mouth. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! They were Dridhashva, Kapilashva and Bhadrashva. Dridhashva's son was Haryashva and his son was known as Nikumbha. Nikumbha's son was Barhinashva. Barhinashva's son was Krishashva. Krishashva's son was Senajit. Senajit's son was Yuvanashva. [1124] He was without any offspring and went to the forest with his one hundred wives. He was miserable and the rishis were filled with compassion for him. They controlled themselves properly and performed a sacrifice to Indra. Thirsty, the king entered the sacrificial pavilion in the night. On seeing that the brahmanas were asleep, he himself drank the water sanctified with mantras. O lord! When they woke up, they saw that there was no water in the pot. They asked, "Who has done this? Who has drunk the water meant for the birth of a son?" On learning that this had been drunk by the king, they took this to be the lord's decree. They bowed down to the lord and exclaimed, "The strength of destiny is powerful." In due course of time, the right side of Yuvanashva's stomach was shattered and he gave birth to a son who would be a chakravarti. The infant started to wail grievously for milk. "Who will suckle this infant?" [1125] Indra said, "O son! Do not cry. Be suckled by me." Saying this, he offered him his index finger. Because he was favoured by the gods and the brahmanas, his father did not die. Yuvanashva performed austerities there and obtained success. O dear one! Indra gave him the name of Trasadasyu. [1126] The bandits, Ravana and the others, were terrified and made anxious by him. Lord Mandhata, Yuvanashva's son, became a chakravarti. Undecaying in his energy, he alone ruled over the seven dvipas. He knew about the atman and performed yajnas and kratus, with copious amounts of dakshina. He worshipped the divinity who is in all the gods and in all the atmans, the one who is beyond the senses. The objects offered, the mantras, the rituals, the sacrifices, the ones performing the sacrifice, the officiating priests, dharma, the time and the place—all these are in his atman. The spot

where the sun rises up to the spot where it sets, all this was said to be the dominion of Mandhata, Yuvanashva's son.

'Through Shashabindu's daughter, Bindumati, the king had the sons Purukutsa, Ambarisha [1127] and Muchukunda, the yogi. They had fifty sisters who accepted Soubhari as their husband. He was submerged in the deep waters of the Yamuna, tormenting himself through supreme austerities. At that time, he saw the king of fishes, happily engaged in the dharma of sexual intercourse. Desire was generated in the brahmana. He approached the king and sought one of his daughters. He replied, "O brahmana! Accept whichever daughter will accept you through a *svayamvara*." [1128] He thought, "I am old. I am wrinkled and grey. My head shakes. I am not liked or respected by women. I will be rejected by them. Therefore, I will act so that even celestial women desire me, not to speak of the daughters of the Indra among men." The lord decided to act in this way. [1129] The messenger ushered the sage into the inner quarters, where the maidens were. All the fifty princesses sought him out as their husband. For his sake, they forgot their mutual affection and quarrelled with each other. Their senses overwhelmed, they said, "He is just like me, not like you." He knew many hymns and possessed the unlimited fruits of austerities. He possessed prosperity, objects and garments. He found pleasure in many houses, groves, the sparkling water of lakes and fragrant gardens. He possessed extremely expensive couches, seats, garments, ornaments, pastes and unguents for bathing, succulent food and garlands. He was always served by ornamented men and women. He was followed by birds, bees and bards. The lord of the seven dvipas was astounded to see his state of *garhasthya*. He cast aside the prosperity of being a universal emperor. Though he was in the midst of many kinds of joy and objects as a householder, like a fire not satisfied with drops of ghee, he [1130] was not content. On one occasion, the one who knew many kinds of hymns was seated. He saw that because of his association with the fish, he had deviated from the pursuit of the atman. "Alas! Behold my destruction. I used to be an ascetic, virtuous in conduct and vows. Inside the water, I became associated with the conduct of aquatic creatures and deviated from the brahman, sustained for a long period of time. A person who

desires liberation must cast aside association with those who follow the vow of sexual intercourse. With all his soul, he must withdraw his senses from external objects. He must be alone and in solitude, immerse his mind in lord Ananta. If he wants an association, that must be with those who follow virtuous vows. I was alone, an ascetic immersed in water. However, because of association with a fish, I became fifty and procreated five thousand. [1131] In this world or in the next one, I do not see any end to desires. My intelligence has been destroyed by maya and gunas and I have become attached to artha and material objects." For some time, he remained as a householder. He then became detached and renounced. He left for the forest, followed by his wives, who regarded their husband as a divinity. There, he tormented himself through fierce austerities. He possessed insight and knowledge about the atman in his atman. He absorbed all the fires [1132] into his atman and united himself with the paramatman. O great king! On seeing the path of adhyatma that he followed, his wives were also scorched by his sentiments and followed him, just as the flames are pacified when a fire is extinguished.'

Chapter 9(7)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Mandhata's foremost son was the famous Ambarisha. His grandfather, Yuvanashva, accepted him as his own son. Ambarisha's son was Youvanashva and Youvanashva's son was Harita. These [1133] are the chief ones in Mandhata's lineage. Her brothers, the serpents, bestowed Narmada on Purukutsa. [1134] Urged by the Indra among the serpents, she took him to rasatala. There, permeated by Vishnu's powers, he slew the gandharvas, who deserved to be killed. He received a boon from the nagas that those who remember this will be free from all fear of snakes. Purukutsa's son was Trasadasyu. [1135] Trasadasyu's son was Anaranya. Anaranya's son was Haryashva. Haryashva's son was Aruna, Aruna's son was Tribandhana. Tribandhana's son was Satyavrata, famous by the name of Trishanku. Because he was cursed by his preceptor, he became a chandala. [1136] Through

Koushika's energy, he went to heaven in his own physical body and can be seen there even today. [1137] The gods made him fall down, with his head hanging downwards, but the great force stopped this. [1138] Trishanku's son was Harishchandra. Because of him, for many years, there was a clash between Vishvamitra and Vasishtha, with both adopting the forms of birds. [1139] He was distressed because he did not have any sons. On Narada's instructions, he went to Varuna and sought his refuge. O great king! He said, "O lord! Let a son be born to me. If a brave son is born to me, I will offer him to you in a sacrifice." Varuna agreed and a son named Rohita was born. When the son was born, he [1140] said, "O dear one! Sacrifice this son to me." The reply was, "When an animal becomes ten days old, it is fit to be sacrificed." When ten days passed, he came and said, "Sacrifice him." The reply was, "When an animal grows its teeth, it is fit to be sacrificed." When the teeth had grown, he said, "Sacrifice him now." The reply was, "When the teeth [1141] have been shed, an animal is fit to be sacrificed." He said, "The animal's teeth have been shed. Sacrifice him now." The reply was, "An animal becomes pure when its teeth have grown again." He said, "The teeth have grown again. Sacrifice him now." The reply was, "O king! A royal animal is pure and can be sacrificed only when the age for donning armour arrives." In this way, he was attached to his son and his mind was overwhelmed by bonds of affection. Citing time, he continued to deceive and the god waited. Rohita got to know what his father intended to do. To save his life, he picked up a bow and left for the forest. He then got to know that Varuna had inflicted dropsy [1142] on his father. Rohita wished to return to the capital, but Indra restrained him. Shakra advised Rohita to travel the earth and frequent sacred tirthas and kshetras. He resided in the forest for one year. In the second, third, fourth and fifth years, Vritra's slayer assumed the form of an aged brahmana, visiting him and telling him the same thing. In the sixth year, roaming around, Rohita returned to the city. Having arrived, he purchased from Ajigarta his middle son, Shunahshepha. [1143] He respectfully offered him to his father as the animal to be sacrificed. The immensely illustrious Harishchandra, extolled because of his deeds, performed a human sacrifice to Varuna and the other gods and was freed from the disease

of the stomach. Vishvamitra was the hotri, Jamadagni, who had realized the atman, was the adhvaryu, Vasishtha was the brahmana and Ayasya recited the Sama hymns. Indra was satisfied and gave him a chariot that was made out of molten gold. Shunahshepha's greatness will be described in due course. [1144] Vishvamitra was extremely happy to see that the king and his wife possessed truth, steadfastness and perseverance and conferred the ultimate objective on them. He [1145] merged his mind in earth, the earth in water, the water in fire, the fire in air, the air in space, that in ahamkara, ahamkara in Mahat and that in different aspects of jnana. [1146] Meditating, he burnt up *ajnana*. [1147] Casting aside all individual sentiments, he became accomplished in the bliss of nirvana. Destroying all bondage, he obtained a state that cannot be conceived and cannot be perceived.'

Chapter 9(8)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Rohita's son was Harita. Harita's son was Champa, who constructed the city of Champapuri. [1148] Champa's son was Sudeva and Sudeva's son was Vijaya. Vijaya's son was Bharuka, Bharuka's son was Vrika and Vrika's son was Bahuka. His enemies seized all the possessions of this king. With his wife, he entered the forest. Since he was old, he merged into the five elements [1149] and his queen wanted to immolate herself on the pyre. However, Ourva [1150] got to know that she was pregnant and restrained her. Finding this out, her co-wives fed her poison along with her food. The child was born along with the poison and was known as the immensely illustrious Sagara. [1151] Sagara was a chakravarti and his sons excavated the ocean. [1152] Obeying the words of his preceptor, [1153] he did not slay the Talajanghas, Yavanas, Shakas, Haihayas and Barbaras. Instead, he made them don terrible attire. He shaved off the heads, but some were allowed to sport beards. Some wore their hair loose, others had half their heads shaven. Some were not allowed to wear inner wear, others were not allowed to wear outer wear. Instructed by Ourva, he performed horse sacrifices to the one who is the atman of all the Vedas and all the gods. With the lord Hari in his

atman, he observed yoga. Purandara stole the animal that was meant to be offered at the sacrifice. Sumati's sons were insolent and followed the instructions of their father. [1154] Searching for the horse, they dug everywhere on earth. Near Kapila, in the north-eastern direction, they saw the horse. "This one, with his eyes closed, is the one who stole the horse. Kill him. Slay the wicked one." Saying this, those sixty thousand approached him with raised weapons, their intelligence robbed by the great Indra. The sage opened his eyes. Having committed this great transgression, they were instantly reduced to ashes by the fire that was in their own bodies. The sage is the store of sattva. Therefore, virtuous people do not say that the princes were vanquished by the sage's rage. How can the anger of tamas be manifested in him? He is the one who purifies the entire universe. He cannot be polluted, just as the sky cannot be tainted by the dust of earth. He is the one who propounded samkhya. For those who wish to be liberated, this is like a firm boat that ferries across the ocean that is the earth, which is so very difficult to cross and is a path that leads to death. He is a learned person immersed in the paramatman. How can he have a sense of differentiation? [1155] The prince known as Asamanjasa was Keshini's son. His son was named Amshuman and he was engaged in ensuring his grandfather's pleasure. Earlier, [1156] Asamanjasa had been a yogi, but had exhibited fickleness. Because of bad associates, he deviated from yoga, though he remembered his past life. His acts were condemned in this world and his deeds were disagreeable to his relatives. While playing, he hurled children into the Sarayu. He generally troubled people. Since his conduct was like this, his father forgot his affection and abandoned him. Through his powers of yoga, he showed those children [1157] and left the place. O king! The residents of Ayodhya were astounded to see all the children return and the king also lamented.

'Urged by the king to search for the horse, Amshuman departed. He followed the path traversed by his uncles and saw the ashes and the horse. He saw the sage by the name of Kapila, Adhokshaja's portion, seated there. He controlled his mind with great attention, joined his hands in salutation and bowed down. Amshuman said, "You are the paramatman and Aja cannot see you. Those engaged in meditation have not been able to comprehend

you, even today. How can others, who have been created from his mind and body? You are not manifest before us. Those who possess bodies are influenced by the three gunas. We can only see those gunas, or only tamas. Our intelligence is confounded by your maya. Based in our bodies, we can only perceive external manifestations. You are the abode of jnana. Sanandana and the other sages have destroyed maya, gunas, differentiation and confusion and worship you. How can a confused person like me comprehend you? O serene one! You are free of maya, gunas, deeds, signs, names, forms, the real and the unreal. You have assumed a body to instruct about jnana. O ancient Purusha! I bow down before you. This world has been fashioned out of your maya. With their minds on material objects and their intelligence confounded, people wander around amidst homes and other things, desire, avarice, envy and illusion. You are in the atmans of all creatures! On seeing you today, all our firm bonds of delusion, desire, karma and the objects of the senses have been severed." The greatness of the illustrious sage, Kapila, was chanted in this way. O king! Showing his favour to Amshuman, he used his intelligence to bless him. The illustrious one said, "O child! This is the horse, your grandfather's sacrificial animal. Take it away. Your uncles have been burnt down and can only be saved through the waters of the Ganga." Bowing his head down, he pleased him [1158] and circumambulated him. He took the horse to Sagara. With the sacrificial animal, the remaining part of the sacrifice was completed. Free of desire and free of bondage, he bestowed the kingdom on Amshuman. Following the path instructed by Ourva, he obtained the supreme destination.'

Chapter 9(9)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Desiring to bring the Ganga down, Amshuman tormented himself through austerities. A long period of time elapsed, but he was unsuccessful. In course of time, he died. His son was Dilipa, but he too was unsuccessful. In course of time, he too died. His son was Bhagiratha and he tormented himself through extremely great austerities. The goddess showed

herself to him. She said, “I am pleased. I will grant you a boon.” Thus addressed, the king humbly explained his intention to her. “O king! Who will bear my force when I descend on the surface of the earth? Otherwise, I will penetrate the surface of the earth and go down to rasatala. Besides, I don’t want to go to earth. There, men will cleanse themselves in me and leave their sins. O king! Who will cleanse me of those sins? Think about that.” Bhagiratha replied, “There are virtuous and tranquil people who have renounced. They contemplate the brahman and purify the world. Through contact with their bodies, they will take away your sins. Hari, the destroyer of sins, is in them. Rudra, whose atman is in embodied beings, will bear your force. Like the warp and woof of the thread in a piece of cloth, the universe is woven into him.” Thus addressed by the king, she said, “Satisfy the god Shiva through austerities.” O king! After a very short period of time, the lord was satisfied with him. Shiva, who ensures the welfare of all the worlds, agreed to what the king said. He attentively bore the Ganga, whose waters have been purified by Hari’s feet. The royal sage, Bhagiratha, brought the purifier of the world to the spot where the bodies of his own ancestors were lying down, having been reduced to ashes. He departed on a chariot that possessed the speed of the wind and she followed him, purifying countries. She then sprinkled Sagara’s sons, who had been burnt down. Though they had been slain by a brahmana’s staff, from the mere touch of the waters on the ashes of their bodies, Sagara’s sons went to heaven. Their scorched limbs were touched and Sagara’s sons went to heaven. What more needs to be said about those who are firm in their vows and serve the goddess faithfully? This is not extraordinary, because the heavenly river arises from Ananta’s lotus feet. Created in this way, she severs material bondage. There are blemishless sages who devotedly immerse their minds in him and give up the three gunas, which are extremely difficult to cast aside. They instantly obtain his atman.

‘Bhagiratha’s son was Shruta and he also had another son named Nabha. Nabha’s son was Sindhudvipa and Ayutayu was born as his son. Ayutayu’s son was Rituparna. He was Nala’s friend. He taught Nala how to gamble with the dice and in exchange, learnt how to tend to horses. Rituparna’s son

was Sarvakama. His son was Sudasa and Sudasa's son was the king who was Madayanti's husband. People know him as Mitra [1159] and some refer to him as Kalmashapada. Because of Vasishtha's curse, he became a rakshasa. And because of his own deeds, he did not have any offspring.'

The king asked, 'Why did his preceptor curse the great-souled Soudasa? [1160] We wish to know this. If it is not a secret, tell us.'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'While roaming around on a hunt, Soudasa killed a rakshasa. However, he let his brother escape and that brother left, intent on vengeance. He thought of a means to harm the king and assumed the form of a cook in his household. When the preceptor desired to eat, he cooked and served him human flesh. When this was being served, the illustrious one easily discerned that this was not food meant to be eaten. He angrily cursed the king, "You will become a rakshasa." But knowing that the act had been committed by a rakshasa, the period was made twelve years. However, he gathered some water in the cup of his hands and got ready to curse his preceptor. [1161] But Madayanti restrained him. Chanting a mantra, since the king saw that the directions, the sky and the entire earth was full of life, he let the water fall on his own feet. He assumed the form of a rakshasa and his feet turned black. [1162] In the forest, he saw a brahmana couple, engaged in the act of sexual intercourse. Afflicted by hunger, he seized the brahmana and his wife lamented and addressed him in words full of meaning. "You are not a rakshasa. You are a maharatha, directly born in the Ikshvaku lineage. O brave one! You are Madayanti's husband and you should not commit an act of adharma. I desire offspring. Give my husband, the brahmana, back to me. I have not yet accomplished my purpose. O king! This human body must accomplish all the objectives of human existence. O brave one! Therefore, when it is destroyed, it is said that all the objectives have been destroyed. This brahmana is full of learning, austerities, good conduct and qualities. He wishes to worship the brahman, known as the great Purusha. He is inside the atmans of all creatures, but because of the gunas, he remains hidden in these creatures. O lord! How does this noble brahmana rishi deserve to be killed by a foremost royal sage like you? O one who knows about dharma! This will be like a son killing a father. He

knows about the brahman and is innocent. It will be like killing a foetus in a womb. How can you think of killing him? That will be like killing a cow. If nevertheless you feel he deserves to be devoured, eat me first. Without him, I will be as good as dead. Without him, I do not wish to live for an instant." She lamented like one without a protector and spoke in these piteous words. But Soudasa was deluded by his curse and ate him, like a tiger eating an animal. The brahmana lady saw that her husband [1163] was devoured by the maneater. The virtuous lady lamented about this and about her own self and angrily cursed him. "O wicked one! I was afflicted by desire and you have devoured my husband. O foolish one! I curse you that you will come about your death when you are engaged in act of sexual intercourse." [1164] Thus, Mitrasaha [1165] was cursed by the one who wished to go where her husband had gone. She placed his bones in an ignited fire and immolating herself, obtained the destination obtained by her husband. When the twelve years were over, he got ready to indulge in an act of sexual intercourse. However, knowing about the curse pronounced by the brahmana lady, his queen restrained him. Thereafter, he held up his seed and gave up all acts of obtaining pleasure with women. Since he did not have any offspring, with his permission, Madayanti had a son through Vasishtha. She bore the embryo for seven years, but did not deliver. Thereafter, he [1166] struck her stomach with a stone and a son was born. He was thus known as Ashmaka. [1167] Mulaka was Ashmaka's son and he was protected by women. He was therefore known as Narikavacha. When there were no kshatriyas left, Mulaka became their origin. [1168] Mulaka's son was Dasharatha [1169] and Dasharatha's son was Aidavida. Aidavida's son was King Vishvasaha and Vishvasaha's son was Khatvanga, the chakravarti. Requested by the gods, he killed invincible daityas in a battle. Getting to know that only a muhurta of his lifespan was left, he returned to his own city and concentrated his mind. "My lives, [1170] my lineage, the gods, my sons, my prosperity, the earth, the kingdom and my wives are not as dear to me as the lineage of the brahmanas. Even in my childhood, my intelligence has had no love for adharma. I do not look upon anything other than Uttamashloka as real. The gods, the lords of the three worlds, offered me the boon that I desired. But since I think about the cre-

ator of all creatures, I do not wish for any boon. The senses and intelligence of the gods are agitated. They do not know what is in their own hearts. There is the beloved and eternal atman. What will one do with other things? This maya has been fashioned by the lord. I give up attachment to the gunas, which are like a city of the gandharvas. Prakriti is in the atman of the creator of the universe and is powerful. But I will give up all these sentiments and obtain him." Having thus made up his mind, he accepted Narayana. He abandoned all notions of ignorance and resorted to his own natural state. There is the subtle and supreme brahman there. It is not empty, though it is thought of as empty. This is the illustrious Vasudeva, whom the Satvatas chant about.'

Chapter 9(10)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Khatvanga's son was Dirghabahu. Dirghabahu's son was Raghu, whose fame was extensive. His son was the great king Aja and Dasharatha was his son. Desired by the gods, the illustrious Hari, full of the brahman, was himself born as his sons in four portions. They are known as Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Shatrughna. O king! Rishis who know about the truth have repeatedly heard and described the conduct of Sita's husband. His lotus feet were so delicate that they were unable to bear the touch of his beloved's hands. However, for the sake of his father, he abandoned the kingdom and roamed around in the forest on these feet. The dust and exhaustion along the road were mitigated by the Indra among the apes [1171] and his younger brother. [1172] When Shurpanakha was disfigured, he became angry as a result of being separated from his beloved. The ocean was terrified at the furrowing of his eyebrows and a bridge was fashioned. The deceitful were burnt down like a forest conflagration. May the Indra of Kosala protect us. At Vishvamitra's sacrifice, there were Maricha and other roamers in the night. While Lakshmana looked on, he slew those bulls among the *nairrita*s. [1173] There was a fierce bow that belonged to Isha [1174] and it was carried by three hundred men. In the house where Sita's svayam-

vara took place, in an assembly of brave people, he seized it, like a young elephant playing with a stalk of sugar cane. O king! He strung and drew it, breaking it in the middle. He won her, who was his equal in beauty, qualities, good conduct and age. She was beautiful in her limbs and was known as Sita. However, she was actually Shri, whom he had already obtained on his chest. Returning along the way, he destroyed the pride of the lord of the Bhrigus, [1175] who had exterminated the seed of kings from the earth thrice. [1176] With his wife, he bowed his head down and accepted the command of his father, who was attached to a woman and bound by the noose of a pledge he had given. He gave up the kingdom, prosperity, those whom he loved, well-wishers and his residence and devoid of all attachment, resided in the forest. The rakshasa's sister [1177] was impure in her intelligence and he disfigured her, slaying fourteen thousand of her invincible relatives, among whom, Khara, Trishira and Dushana were the foremost. With a great deal of difficulty and with a bow in his hand, he resided in the forest. O king! On hearing about Sita's account, desire was ignited in the heart of the one with ten heads. On seeing the extraordinary form, [1178] he was drawn away from the hermitage and used his arrow to swiftly kill Maricha, just as the fierce one killed Kah. [1179] The daughter of the king of Videha was unprotected in the forest. Like a wolf, the inferior rakshasa abducted her. Separated from his beloved, with his brother, he wandered around, miserable in the forest. For those who are attached to women, this condition is an example. He performed the funeral rites for the one who had given up his life [1180] in his cause and killed Kabandha. With the objective of reaching his beloved, he contracted friendship with the apes. After Vali was killed, he learnt about her. His feet are worshipped by Aja and Bhava, though he was now in human form. With the soldiers of the Indra among apes, he went to the shores of the ocean. His angry glance terrified and agitated crocodiles and makaras, and the fear silenced their roar. The personified form of the ocean bore articles of worship on its head and approaching his lotus feet, said, "O supreme one! We are foolish and did not know you. You are the original Purusha who is in the heart. You are the supreme lord of the universe. You are the sattva from which large number of gods result. You are the rajas from

which lords of subjects result. I think that you are the lord of the bhutas. [1181] You are the lord of the gunas. Cross me as you will and kill Vishrava's excrement, [1182] known as Ravana in the three worlds. O valiant one! Get your wife back. To extend your fame, construct a bridge here. All the conquerors of the directions will approach you and sing your praise." The lord of the Raghu lineage used the summits of mountains to construct a bridge. Sugriva, Nila, Hanuman and other foremost leaders of the army, Indras among apes, made trees quake with their arms. As instructed by Vibhishana, they entered Lanka, which had already been burnt down earlier. The army of the Indra among apes laid siege to the pleasure chambers, the treasuries, the gates, the turrets, the assembly halls, the facades of mansions and the pinnacles. [1183] They shattered the platforms, flagpoles, standards and golden pots and destroyed the crossroads, like a herd of elephants agitating a river. The lord of the rakshasas saw this. He summoned Nikumbha, Kumbha, Dhumraksha, Durmukha, Surantaka, Narantaka and others, his son, [1184] Prahasta, Atikaya, Akampana and others, all his followers and Kumbhakarna. He urged them. The army of the yatudhanas was impenetrable because of swords, spears, bows, javelins, double-edged swords, spikes, arrows, clubs and long swords. However, Sugriva, Lakshmana, the son of the wind god, [1185] Gandhamada, Nila, Angada, the bear, [1186] Panasa and the others penetrated it. All the leaders in the army of the lord of Raghu followed and challenged the rival army, full of elephants, foot soldiers, chariots and those fighting on horses. Angada and the others slew them with trees, mountains and arrows. Because of Sita's rage, Ravana's followers had been struck by the inauspicious. The lord of the rakshasas saw that his own army was being destroyed and became angry. Astride his vehicle, he advanced towards Rama, who was resplendent astride his own chariot, brought to him by Matali. [1187] He [1188] struck the dazzling one with sharp *kshurapra*s. [1189] Rama told him, "You are the excrement among those who survive on human flesh. Like a dog, you abducted my beloved when we were absent. You are most abominable and have no shame. Like Death, whose valour is irresistible, I will today give you the fruits of your deeds." Censuring him, he affixed an arrow to his bow. It was like the vajra and pierced his heart. Vomiting

blood, the one with the ten heads fell down from his vimana. His good deeds had been exhausted and his followers screamed, "Alas!" Thousands of yatudhana women emerged from Lanka. With Mandodari, [1190] they approached and lamented. They embraced their own respective relatives, who had been brought down by Lakshmana's arrows. Striking their own breasts, those miserable ones wept in loud tones. "Alas! We have been slain. You were our protector! O Ravana! You were the one who made the worlds shriek. To find refuge, whom will we go to now? Without you, Lanka has been afflicted by the enemy. O immensely fortunate one! You did not know that you had come under the subjugation of desire. You did not comprehend Sita's energy and have been reduced to this state. O delight of the lineage! We, and Lanka, have become widows. You have made your body food for vultures and there is reason for your atman to go to hell." With the approval of the Indra of Kosala, Vibhishana performed the recommended funeral rites, with the sanctioned oblations to ancestors.

'After this, the illustrious one saw her in a hermitage in Ashokavana. Suffering from the disease of separation from him, she was lean and had sought refuge at the foot of a *shimshapa* tree. [1191] On seeing his beloved wife in this miserable condition, Rama was filled with pity. This was despite her face blooming with delight, like a lotus, on seeing him. The illustrious one gave Vibhishana the lordship over large numbers of rakshasas and conferred on Lanka a lifespan till the end of the kalpa. With the period of his vow over, he made her climb the vehicle and with his brother and Hanuman, also ascended it, leaving for his city. Along the path, the guardians of the worlds showered down excellent flowers. Delighted, Shatadhriti [1192] and the others chanted his praise. His brother [1193] was attired in garments made of bark and only ate barley cooked in cow's urine. His hair was matted and he slept on the bare ground, with kusha grass spread over it. Hearing all this, he was filled with great compassion. Bharata heard that he had arrived. Placing the sandals on his head and with the citizens, the advisers and the priests, he left his camp at Nandigrama to go and receive his elder brother, Rama. There was the sound of singing and the playing of musical instruments. Those who knew about the brahman repeatedly

read out the chant of the brahman. There were flags with golden edges and chariots with colourful and golden flags. There were well-trained horses with golden harnesses and soldiers with armour made out of gold. Shrenis, [1194] the best of courtesans and servants followed on foot. All the objects, superior and inferior, required to welcome the supreme one were taken. His heart melting with tears of affection, he fell down at his feet and offered these. He placed the sandals in front of him. Eyes filled with tears, he joined his hands in salutation and stood there. With his arms, Rama embraced him for a very long time, bathing him with tears from his eyes. With Lakshmana and Sita, he worshipped the excellent and deserving brahmanas. He bowed down before them. In turn, the subjects bowed down before him. The residents of Uttara Kosala [1195] saw that their lord, who had been away for a long time, had returned and waved their upper garments around. Delighted, they offered him garlands and danced. Bharata carried the sandals. Vibhishana and Sugriva bore the excellent fan and whisks. The son of the wind god held aloft the white umbrella. Shatrughna carried the bow and quivers, Sita the water pot with water from the tirthas. O king! Angada carried the sword and the bear the golden shield. O king! Astride Pushpaka, he was praised by the women and the bards. The illustrious one was radiant, like the rising moon amidst the planets. Welcomed by his brother, he entered the city in the midst of festivities. He entered the royal residence and paid his respects to his father's wives and to his own mother. He honoured the seniors, friends and juniors and was honoured back by them. In a similar way, Vaidehi [1196] and Lakshmana also entered. On seeing their respective sons, the mothers arose, as if life had returned to them. They took them on their laps and bathed them with tears, giving up their grief. Along with the aged ones of the family, the preceptor [1197] followed the rites and cut off the matted hair, consecrating him, just as Indra is sprinkled with water from the four oceans. With his head taken care of, he bathed. He attired himself in excellent garments and adorned himself with garlands. He was surrounded by his brothers and his wife, who were also well-attired and well-ornamented. Pleased at the obeisance exhibited by his brother, he accepted the throne. Like a father, Rama protected the subjects, who were devoted to

their own dharma, in accordance with their varnas, their ashramas and their qualities. They thought that he was like their father. Though the age was that of treta yuga, it seemed to be equal to krita yuga. Rama knew about dharma and when he was the king, there was happiness for all living beings. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Forests, rivers, mountains, varshas, dvipas and oceans yielded all the objects of desire for the subjects. There was no mental or physical disease, no old age, no distress, no unhappiness, no grief, no fear and no exhaustion. As long as Rama Adhokshaja was the king, no one died unless he wished to. The royal sage was pure in conduct and followed the vow of having only one wife. He followed his own dharma of being a householder and instructed through his own conduct. The virtuous Sita pleased his mind and followed him with love, good conduct, submissiveness, humility, bashfulness and modesty. She understood what her husband wanted.'

Chapter 9(11)

Shri-Shuka said, 'The illustrious one's atman was full of all the gods. Under the guidance of a preceptor, Rama undertook sacrifices with excellent objects to worship the gods, but really worshipped himself. The lord gave the eastern direction to the hotri, the southern direction to the brahmana, the western direction to the adhvaryu and the northern direction to the one who chanted the Sama hymns. [1198] He gave the preceptor [1199] what was left, the land at the centre. He thought that detached brahmanas should deserve all of this. He was only left with his own ornaments and garments. In that way, the queen, Vaidehi was also only left with her auspicious objects. [1200] On witnessing his affection towards brahmanas and gods, their hearts melted. They [1201] were pleased and returned all this. Praising him, they said, "O illustrious one! O lord of the universe! There is nothing that you have not given to us. You have entered the inner cores of our hearts and have used your radiance to destroy the darkness there. You have accepted the brahmanas as divinities. We bow down to you. We bow to Rama, who is unlim-

ited in his intelligence. You are foremost among those who are praised with excellent shlokas. Your feet are worshipped by those who are beyond the rod of chastisement." [1202] On one occasion, he wished to know about the people. Rama wandered around in the night, disguised and undetected. He heard words being spoken by someone to his wife. "You are wicked and unchaste. You have gone to someone else's house. I will not accept you. A person like Rama, under the subjugation of a woman, can accept Sita. However, I will no longer love you." Thus, people who do not know speak a lot and are impossible to control. However, scared of this, he cast his wife away and she went to the hermitage of Prachetas. [1203] She was pregnant and after some time, gave birth to twin sons. They were known as Kusha and Lava and the sage performed all their rites. O dear one! O lord of the earth! Lakshmana had two sons known as Chitraketu. [1204] Bharata's sons were Taksha and Pushkala. Shatrughna's sons were Subahu and Shrutasena. When he conquered the directions, Bharata slew crores of gandharvas. He brought all their riches and gave them to the king. Shatrughna killed the rakshasa named Lavana, who was Madhu's son. In Madhu's forest, he constructed a city named Mathura. Banished by her husband, Sita handed over her two sons to the sage. Meditating on Rama's feet, she entered the earth. Hearing this, the illustrious Rama used his intelligence to control his grief. However, remembering her qualities, the lord was unable to check himself. Thus, everywhere, the attachment between a man and a woman brings fear even to those who are lords. What need be said about ordinary people whose minds are on the life of a householder? When she departed, the lord observed the vow of a brahmachari. He continuously performed an agnihotra sacrifice for thirteen thousand years. Then Rama used his own resplendence to go to the atman. As a memory for hearts, he left behind his own delicate feet, pierced by the thorns of Dandaka.

'Raghupati's [1205] fame is not just that he accomplished the desire of the gods. With his bow and arrows he slew rakshasas and built a bridge over the ocean. He did not really need the help of the apes to slay the enemy. The lord's pastimes are such that there is no one who is his equal or his superior. His fame is without blemish and even now, is chanted by rishis in assem-

blies of kings. It destroys all sins and is like a decorated garment that covers the elephants in charge of the directions. The diadems of the guardians of the vault of heaven and the guardians of riches on earth bow down at his lotus feet. I seek refuge with Raghupati. The residents of Kosala who were touched or seen by him, those who were associated with him or followed him, went to the destination where yogis go. O king! If a man hears about Rama's conduct, nurtures this and is non-violent towards others, he is freed from the bondage of action.'

The king asked, 'O illustrious one! How did Rama conduct himself? How did he behave towards his brothers and followers? How did the subjects and citizens behave towards their lord?'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'The lord of the three worlds instructed his brothers to embark on a conquest. With his followers, he himself tended to his people and the city. The roads were sprinkled with fragrant water, mixed with the musth of elephants. On seeing that their lord had returned, the people seemed to be extremely intoxicated. Mansions, turrets, assembly halls, chaityas [1206] and temples of the gods were ornamented with flags, and golden pots were placed there. The arches were decorated with betel nut trees, plantain trees with bunches of flowers, flags, excellent pieces of cloth, mirrors, canopies, garlands and auspicious marks. The citizens approached him with objects of worship in their hands. They pronounced their benedictions and said, "O god! As on earlier occasions, you have come down to save us." Their lord had been away for a long time. On witnessing this, the subjects, men and women, emerged from their houses, so as to see the lotus-eyed one. They ascended the tops of mansions, but their eyes were not satisfied. They showered down flowers. He entered his own house, occupied by kings who had come before him. It possessed an infinite amount of all kinds of treasures and was prosperous and lofty, with all kinds of extremely expensive objects. The thresholds and doors were made out of coral. The rows of pillars were encrusted with lapis lazuli. The floors were covered with emeralds and the walls were radiant with sparkling crystals. There were colourful garlands, flags, garments, clusters of gems and canopies. Pearls enhanced the delight of the mind and there were beautiful objects to satisfy

desire. It was decorated with fragrant incense and lamps and ornamented with bunches of flowers. It was populated by garmented and ornamented men and women who were like the gods. The illustrious Rama resided there, along with his pleasant beloved. With Sita, the foremost among intelligent ones sported and found pleasure for himself. He satisfied kama for some time, but without causing any offence to dharma. The one whose delicate feet are meditated on by men spent many years in this way.'

Chapter 9(12)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Kusha's son was Atithi, Atithi's son was Nishadha and Nishadha's son was Nabha. Nabha's son was Pundarika and Pundarika's son was Kshemadhanva. Kshemadhanva's son was Devanika, Devanika's son was Aniha and Aniha's son was Pariyatra. Pariyatra's son was Balasthala. Balasthala's son was Vajranabha, who was born through the sun god. Vajranabha's son was Svagana and Svagana's son was Vidhriti. Vidhriti had a son named Hiranyanabha, who was Jaimini's disciple and was a preceptor of yoga. By becoming his disciple, the rishi Yajnavalkya learnt *adhyatma yoga* and became accomplished in it. This yoga leads to great upliftment and severs the bonds of the heart. Hiranyanabha's son was Pushya and Dhruvasandhi was born from him. Dhruvasandhi's son was Agnivarna, Agnivarna's son was Shighra and Shighra's son was Maru. Maru obtained success in yoga and still lives in Kalapagrama. [1207] When kali yuga is over, he will again revive the solar dynasty, which has been destroyed. Maru's son was Prasushruta, Prasushruta's son was Sandhi and Sandhi's son was Amarshana. Amarshana had a son named Mahasvan and Vishvabahu was born as his son. Vishvabahu's son was Prasenjit and Prasenjit's son was Takshaka. Takshaka's son was Brihadbala, whom your father killed in the battle. [1208] These are the kings of the Ikshvaku lineage who have come in the past. Now hear about those in the future. Brihadbala will have a son named Brihadrana. [1209] Brihadrana's son will be Urukriya and his son will be Vatsavriddha. His son will be Prativyoma. Prativyoma's son will be Bhanu.

Bhanu's son will be Divaka, the commander of an army. Divaka's son will be the brave Sahadeva, Sahadeva's son will be Brihadashva and Brihadashva's son will be Bhanuman. Bhanuman's son will be Pratikashva and Pratikashva's son will be Supratika. Supratika's son will be Marudeva, Marudeva's son will be Sunakshatra and Sunakshatra's son will be Pushkara. Pushkara's son will be Antariksha, Antariksha's son will be Sutapa and Sutapa's son will be Amitrajit. Amitrajit's son will be Brihadraja, Brihadraja's son will be Barhi, Barhi's son will be Kritanjaya, Kritanjaya's son will be Rananjaya and Rananjaya's son will be Sanjaya. Sanjaya's son will be Shakya, Shakya's son will be Shuddhoda and Shuddhoda's son will be known as Langala. Langala's son will be Prasenjit and Kshudraka will be born as his son. Kshudraka's son will be Ranaka and Ranaka's son will be Suratha. Suratha's son will be named Sumitra and he will be the last one in Brihadbala's lineage. The lineage of the Ikshvaku's will end with Sumitra. When he becomes the king, the lineage will end in kali yuga.'

Chapter 9(13)

Shri-Shuka said, 'When he started a sacrifice, Nimi, Ikshvaku's son, invited Vasishtha to be the officiating priest. But he said, "Shakra has already asked me. [1210] I will return when I have completed that. Till then, wait." The lord of the house [1211] was silent and he started to perform Indra's sacrifice. Nimi was in control of his atman and knew that everything was transitory. [1212] Therefore, when his preceptor did not return for a long time, he started the sacrifice with other officiating priests. After completion, his preceptor returned and saw that the disciple had transgressed him. He cursed him. "Nimi prides himself on being learned. May his body fall down." Since his preceptor had not followed the path of dharma, Nimi cursed him back. "You do not know about dharma and are driven by greed. Therefore, let your body also fall down." Nimi knew about adhyatma. Saying this, he gave up his own body. My great-grandfather was born through Mitra-Varuna and Urvashi. [1213] The best of sages preserved his [1214] body in various fragrances.

When the sacrifice was over, they told the assembled gods, "If you possess the powers and if you are pleased, let the king's body come back to life." They agreed. But Nimi said, "Do not do this and inflict the bondage of the body on me. One is afflicted by the fear of being separated from it. Therefore, sages do not wish to be united with the body. Instead, they use their intelligence to worship Hari's lotus feet. I do not wish to accept the body. It brings unhappiness, grief and fear. It is surrounded by death from all sides, just as fish are surrounded by water." The gods replied, "You are based in adhyatma. As you desire, reside in the eyes of embodied creatures, when they open and close them." [1215] The maharshis thought that without a king, humans would suffer from fear. They churned Nimi's body and a son was born.

'Because he was born in this way, he was known as Janaka. Because he was born from one without a body, he was known as Vaideha. Because he was born through a process of churning, he was known as Mithila. [1216] He constructed Mithila. His son was Udavasu and Udavasu's son was Nandivardhana. O great king! Nandivardhana's son was Suketu and Suketu's son was Devarata. Devarata's son was Brihadratha, Brihadratha's son was Mahavirya, the father of Sudhriti. Sudhriti's son was Dhrishtaketu, Dhrishtaketu's son was Haryashva and Haryashva's son was Maru. Maru's son was Pratipaka and Pratipaka's son was Kritaratha. Kritaratha's son was Devamidha, Devamidha's son was Vishruta and Vishruta's son was Mahadhriti. Svarnaroma's son was Hrasvaroma. Hrasvaroma's son was Shiradhvaja. For the sake of a sacrifice, he ploughed the earth. Sita was born from the tip of the plough and thus he is remembered as Shiradhvaja. [1217] Shiradhvaja's son was Kushadhvaja and his son was King Dharmadhvaja. Dharmadhvaja had two sons—Kritadhvaja and Mitadhvaja. Kritadhvaja's son was Keshidhvaja, while Mitadhvaja's son was Khandikya. O king! Kritadhvaja's son was accomplished in knowledge about the atman. Khandikya knew the truth about performing karma. However, terrified of Keshidhvaja, he ran away. Keshidhvaja's son was Bhanuman and Bhanuman's son was Sudyumna. Sudyumna's son was Shuchi, Shuchi's son was Sanadvaja, Sanadvaja's son was Urdhvaketu, Urdhvaketu's son was Aja and Aja's son was Purujit. Pu-

rujit's son was Arishtanemi, Arishtanemi's son was Shrutayu, Shrutya's son was Suparshvaka, Suparshvaka's son was Chitraratha and Chitraratha's son was Kshemadhi, the lord of Mithila. His son was Samaratha and Samaratha's son was Satyaratha. Satyaratha's son was Upaguru and his son was Upagupta, born as a portion of Agni. His son was Vasvananta, Vasvananta's son was Yuyudha, Yuyudha's son was Subhashana, Subhashana's son was Shruta, Shruta's son was Jaya, Jaya's son was Vijaya and Vijaya's son was Rita. Rita's son was Shunaka, Shunaka's son was Vitahavya, Vitahavya's son was Dhriti, Dhriti's son was Bahulashva and Bahulashva's son was Kriti, who was extremely controlled. O king! These ones from Mithila were accomplished in knowledge about the atman. Though they were householders, through the favours of the lord of yoga, they were free from all kinds of opposite sentiments.'

Chapter 9(14)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O king! After this, hear about Soma's sacred lineage. There were Aila [1218] and other kings, famous for their sacred deeds. Purusha possesses one thousand heads and from the lotus in his navel, the creator [1219] was born. He had a son named Atri, who was like his father in qualities. From his eyes, [1220] Soma was born as a son and he was full of amrita. Brahma thought of him as the lord of brahmanas, herbs and the stellar bodies. He conquered the three worlds and performed a royal sacrifice. Because of his insolence, he forcibly abducted Brihaspati's wife, Tara. The preceptor of the gods entreated him. However, because of his arrogance, he paid no heed to this. When he did not give her up, on her account, there was a battle between the gods and the danavas. Because of his enmity, Shukra took the side of the asuras and the lord of the stars. Out of his affection, surrounded by all the large number of bhutas, Hara took the side of his preceptor's son. [1221] With all the large number of gods, the great Indra followed his preceptor. The gods and the asuras were slaughtered in the course of the *tarakamaya* battle. [1222] When Angiras informed him about this, the creator of the

universe reprimanded Soma. The lord made him restore Tara to her own husband, but she was already pregnant. He [1223] said, "O evil-minded one! Quickly abort this foetus. Your kshetra has been impregnated by someone other than me. Since you are a woman, I cannot reduce you to ashes. You wanted a son, but have been unchaste." Ashamed, Tara delivered, and a son with a golden complexion was born. The son of Angiras and Soma both desired this son. They fought over him and said, "He belongs to me and not to you." The rishis and gods asked her, [1224] but ashamed, she did not reply. Enraged at his mother's false sense of shame, the son told her, "O one who is wicked in conduct! Why don't you speak? Quickly tell me what you are not saying." Brahma summoned her in private. Comforting her, he inquired. Softly, she said, "He is Soma's." Thereafter, Soma accepted him. O king! The one who created himself gave him the name of Budha. [1225] Seeing that his son was full of deep wisdom, the lord of the stars was delighted. As has already been stated, [1226] Pururava was born through him and Ila.

'In Indra's residence, the rishi [1227] chanted about his beauty, qualities, generosity, good conduct and valour. Hearing this, the celestial Urvashi was afflicted by the arrows of love and approached him. Because of the curse of Mitra and Varuna, she had come to the world of men. She heard about the best of men, who was like Kandarpa [1228] in his beauty. Resorting to her patience, the maiden approached him in private. On seeing her, the king's eyes dilated in joy and his body hair stood up. He spoke in gentle words to the celestial lady. The king said, "O one with the beautiful hips! Welcome. Please be seated. What can I do for you? Enjoy yourself with me. May our love last for an eternal number of years." Urvashi replied, "O handsome one! Whose mind and sight will not be attracted towards you? Engulfed by your limbs, it is not possible to give up sexual desire. O king! O one who confers honours! I am entrusting these two lambs with you. I will find pleasure with you. It has been said that a praiseworthy man is the right husband for a woman. O valiant one! However, I will only eat ghee. Except at the time of sexual intercourse, I will not see you naked." The great-minded one agreed that it would be this way. "Your beauty and sentiments are wonderful. You enchant the world of men. Which man will not serve a celestial

beauty who has arrived of her own accord?" With her, as is appropriate, the best among men sported himself. As they desired, they pleasured themselves in the pleasure grounds of the gods, Chaitraratha and other places. She was as fragrant as the filament of a lotus and he enjoyed himself with the celestial one. His excitement was enhanced by the fragrance of her mouth and he enjoyed himself for many days. Unable to see Urvashi, Indra urged the gandharvas. "Without Urvashi, my residence is no longer as beautiful as it used to be." They approached in the middle of the night, when it was dark. They stole Urvashi's two lambs, entrusted to the king by his wife. The celestial lady regarded them as sons born from her own womb and she heard them crying. "Alas! I have been ruined by this wicked protector. Though he prides himself on being brave, he is a eunuch. Since I trusted him, they have been destroyed and are being slain by bandits. He seems to be a man during the day. But at night, he is terrified and sleeps like a woman." These words were like arrows and piercing. He seized his sword in the night and though he was naked, advanced angrily. They released the two lambs, but blazed like lightning. She was happy that having grabbed the lambs, her husband was returning, but he was naked. Aila could no longer see his wife on the bed and was distressed. His mind was disturbed. Grieving, he roamed around the earth, like a person who was mad.

'He saw her in Kurukshetra, on the banks of the Sarasvati. Her face was happy and she was with five friends. Pururava addressed her in a sukta. [1229] "O wife! Stay! O cruel one! Stay! You should not abandon me. Even now, your obtaining happiness from me has not ended. [1230] Let us converse. O divine lady! Now that you have cast me aside, far away, my excellent body will fall down. Since it no longer finds favour with you, wolves and vultures will devour it." Urvashi replied, "Do not give up your life. You are a man. You must not allow wolves to devour you now. The hearts of women are like those of wolves and one should not have friendship with them. Women are merciless and cruel. They are extremely intolerant. For the sake of love, they can be rash. It is said that even for a trifling reason, they can kill a trusting husband or a brother. They can be deceitful and generate trust in ignorant men. They can abandon well-wishers. Desiring a new and newer

lover, their conduct can be like that of pumshchalis and svairinis. At the end of every year, you will be my lord for one night. There will be offspring through our pleasure. However, you will also have other offspring." [1231] On seeing that the divine lady was pregnant, he left for his own city. At the end of the year, he went there again. Urvashi was then the mother of a brave son. Filled with delight, he spent the night with her. However, he was miserable at the prospect of separation and Urvashi spoke to him. "Seek refuge with the gandharvas and they will bestow me on you." O king! Satisfied by his praises, they gave him an *agnisthali*. [1232] He took this to be Urvashi and roamed around in the forest. When he understood, he left the vessel in the forest. He returned home and meditated through the night. Treta yuga was about to start and knowledge of the three [1233] was manifested in his mind. Going to the place where the vessel had been left, he saw an *ashvattha* tree growing from a *shami* tree. Desiring to go to Urvashi's world, he used these as two churning rods. [1234] Chanting the *urvashi mantra*, [1235] the lord mediated on the upper and lower *arani* and the intervening space as the son who would be born from him. When they were rubbed against each other, the fire god, Jataveda, was generated. [1236] The king thought of the three kinds of knowledge as three of his sons. He desired to go to Urvashi's world. Therefore, with that fire, he worshipped the lord of sacrifices, the illustrious Adhokshaja Hari, who is in all the gods. In earlier times, there was only one Veda—the syllable Oum, the store of all speech. There was only one divinity, Narayana. There was one Agni and one varna. O king! When treta yuga was about to start, Pururava made them three. Making Agni his son, the king went to the world of the gandharvas.'

Chapter 9(15)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O king! Through Urvashi's womb, Aila had six sons—Ayu, Shrutayu, Satyayu, Raya, Vijaya and Jaya. Shrutayu's son was Vasuman and Satyayu's son was Shrutanjaya. Raya's son was Eka and Jaya's son was Amita. Vijaya's son was Bhima, Bhima's son was Kanchana and

Kanchana's son was Hotraka. Hotraka's son was Jahnu, who held the Ganga in the cup of his hand and drank her up. [1237] Jahnu's son was Puru, Puru's son was Balaka and Balaka's son was Ajaka. Ajaka's son was Kusha. Kusha had four sons—Kushambu, Tanaya, Vasu and Kushanabha. Kushambu's son was Gadhi. A brahmana named Richika sought Gadhi's daughter, Satyavati, in marriage. Considering that the groom was not an equal, Gadhi told Bhargava, [1238] "We belong to Kusha's lineage. Give one thousand horses as a price for the girl. They should be as radiant as the moon. But each should have one ear that is black." Having been thus addressed, he understood the intention and went to Varuna. He brought and gave those horses and married the one with the beautiful face. Both his wife and his mother-in-law desired offspring and beseeched the rishi. He cooked charu for both and pronounced mantras on them. [1239] The sage then went to have a bath. Satyavati's mother asked her for the charu that had been cooked for her, taking it to be superior. Having given her that, she herself ate what was meant for her mother. Learning this, the sage told his wife, "You have given rise to a great hardship. Your son will be as terrible as the wielder of the rod. [1240] Your brother will be excellent in his knowledge of the brahman." Pacified by Satyavati, Bhargava again said, "If your son is not like that, your grandson will be like that." Jamadagni was born in this way. She became the extremely sacred Koushiki, [1241] the purifier of the world. It is said that Jamadagni married Renuka, Renu's daughter. Through her, Bhargava rishi had Vasuman and other sons. The youngest to be born was famous as Rama. [1242] He is said to have been born from Vasudeva's portion and brought an end to the lineage of the Haihayas. He exterminated kshatriyas from the earth twenty-one times. The insolent kshatriyas had become a burden on earth and caused harm to brahmanas. They were filled with great rajas and tamas. They caused offence, even because of a trifling reason.'

The king asked, 'What did those royal ones, who were not in control of their atmans, do to the illustrious one? Why was the lineage of the kshatriyas repeatedly destroyed?'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'The bull among kshatriyas, Arjuna [1243] was the lord of the Haihayas. He followed the rituals and worshipped Datta, [1244] a por-

tion of the illustrious one. He thus obtained one thousand arms and was invincible in the midst of the enemy. His senses and power could not be restrained and he possessed prosperity, energy, valour, fame and strength. He obtained the powers and qualities of a lord of yoga, such as anima and the others. Without any restrictions, he roamed around the world, like the wind. Intoxicated with arrogance, he was once sporting in the waters of the Reva, [1245] surrounded by jewels among women. Radiant with a vaijayanti garland, [1246] he obstructed the waters of the river with his arms. The waters of the river started to flow in the opposite direction and flooded Dashanana's [1247] own camp. Proud of his own valour, he could not tolerate the other's prowess. When he caused him offence in the presence of the women, he [1248] playfully seized him and imprisoned him in Mahishmati, [1249] thereafter releasing him like a monkey. Once, as he pleased, he was wandering around in the desolate forest on a hunt and entered Jamadagni's hermitage. The sage offered the divinity among men objects of worship. With his Havishmati, [1250] the store of austerities took care of the soldiers, the advisers and the mounts. He saw that jewel and also saw that his [1251] prosperity was far greater than his own. With the Haihayas, he didn't welcome the hospitality, but desired the one who provided for agnihotra sacrifices. Insolent, he urged his men to seize the rishi's Havishmati. With her calf, she was forcibly taken to Mahishmati, weeping as she was conveyed. When the king had left, Rama returned to the hermitage. Hearing about the wicked act, he was angry, like a snake that has been struck. He grasped his terrible battleaxe, quivers, armour and a bow. The extremely intolerant one followed, like a lion pursuing the leader of a herd. [1252] The noble and energetic one of the Bhrigu lineage descended. He wielded a bow. His weapons were arrows and a battleaxe. His garment was made out of black deer skin and his matted hair was as dazzling as the sun. As he [1253] was entering his city, he saw him. He urged seventeen extremely terrible *akshouhini*s, [1254] consisting of elephants, chariots, horses and foot soldiers, to fight against him. They wielded clubs, swords, arrows, javelins, shataghnis [1255] and spears. However, the illustrious one slaughtered them single-handedly. With the speed of the mind and of the wind, the slayer of enemies struck here and there with his bat-

tleaxe. In every such spot, arms, thighs and necks fell down on the ground. The charioteers and the mounts were killed. Haihaya saw that his own soldiers were brought down in the battle by Rama's battleaxe and arrows. They lay down in a mire formed out of blood. Their armour, standards and bows were scattered, the bodies were brought down. Filled with rage, he attacked. With five hundred hands, Arjuna simultaneously fixed arrows to five hundred bows in Rama's direction. However, Rama was foremost among the wielders of weapons. With arrows shot from a single bow, he simultaneously severed these. In the field of battle, he [1256] forcefully attacked, using his hands to uproot mountains and trees and fling them. But Rama used his axe, firm at the edges, to powerfully sever his arms, which were like the hoods of a serpent. With the arms severed, the head was like the summit of a mountain and he severed this too. When their father was killed, his ten thousand sons fled in fear. The destroyer of enemy heroes retrieved the suffering one who provided for agnihotra sacrifices and her calf and returning to the hermitage, gave them to his father.

'Rama told his father and his brothers what he had done. Hearing this, Jamadagni spoke to him. "O Rama! O mighty-armed one! O Rama! You have performed a wicked deed. This was unnecessary. The divinity among men was full of all the gods and you have killed him. O son! We are brahmanas. We are worshipped because we are forgiving. That is the way the preceptor of the worlds and of the gods [1257] has attained his status of Parameshthi. Forgiveness in a brahmana is agreeable. Like the radiance of the sun, it is their prosperity. The illustrious lord, Hari, is quickly pleased through forgiveness. The king's head is sprinkled in a consecration and killing him is more serious than the killing of a brahmana. O dear one! With Achyuta in your mind, go to the tirthas and wash away this sin."'

Chapter 9(16)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O descendant of the Kuru lineage! Rama was thus instructed by his father. Agreeing, he roamed around for a year, visiting

tirthas. He then returned to the hermitage. Once, Renuka went to the Ganga. She saw the king of the gandharvas, [1258] wearing a garland of lotuses, sporting there with apsaras. Having gone to the river for some water, she saw him sporting there. Desiring Chitraratha a bit, she forgot that it was time to offer oblations into the fire. Realizing that the time had passed, she was scared that the sage might curse her. Having returned, she placed the water pot and stood before him, her hands joined in salutation. Discerning that his wife had been guilty of a transgression, the sage was enraged. He said, "O sons! Kill this wicked one." But they did not do what they had been asked to. His father then urged Rama to kill his mother and his brothers. Through his meditation and his austerities, he knew about the sage's powers and acted accordingly. Satyavati's son [1259] was pleased at this and requested him to ask for a boon. Rama said, "Let those who have been killed come back to life and let them not remember who killed them. They instantly arose, well, as if after sleeping. Rama had killed his relatives because he had known about his father's learning, austerities and valour.

'O king! Arjuna's sons remembered the slaying of their own father. Having been vanquished by Rama's valour, they could find no peace. Once, when Rama and his brothers had gone to the forest, they arrived at the hermitage. Because of the enmity, they desired revenge and finding an opportunity, arrived. The sage was seated at the place where the fire was kept, his mind absorbed in the illustrious Uttamashloka. Evil in their determination, they saw him and killed him. Piteously, Rama's mother beseeched those extremely terrible ones. However, those kshatra-bandhus forcibly severed the head and took it away. Afflicted by grief, Renuka beat herself. The chaste lady screamed in sorrow, "O Rama! O son! O Rama!" From a distance, Rama heard these sounds of lamentation. He swiftly returned to the hermitage and saw that his father had been killed. He was bewildered by the force of grief, anger, intolerance, affliction and misery and said, "Alas! O father! You were virtuous. You followed dharma. You have abandoned us and have gone to heaven." Lamenting in this way, he entrusted his father's body to his brothers. Rama seized the battleaxe, making up his mind to destroy kshatriyas. Rama went to Mahishmati, which had lost its prosperity

because a brahmana had been killed. O king! In the midst of the city, he created a giant mountain out of their heads. [1260] Their blood created a terrible river which caused fear to those who were against brahmanas. With his father's killing being a reason, he became extremely inauspicious for the kshatriyas. On twenty-one occasions, the lord exterminated all kshatriyas from earth. In the place known as Samantapanchaka, he created nine lakes of blood. [1261] He fixed his father's head to the body and laid it down on *barhi* grass. Through sacrifices, he worshipped the one who is in the atmans of all the gods. All the gods are in him. He gave the eastern direction to the hotri, the southern direction to the brahmana, the western direction to the adhvaryu and the northern direction to the udgatri. He gave others the corners, the centre to Kashyapa, Aryavarta to the officiating priests and all that remained to the assistant priests. Thereafter, he had the bath to complete the sacrifice in the great river Sarasvati, cleansing himself of all the sin that remained. He was as radiant as the sun in a sky without clouds. Jamadagni got his own body back, with all the signs of jnana. [1262] Worshipped by Rama, he became the seventh in the circle of rishis. [1263]

'O king! In the next manvantara, Rama, Jamadagni's lotus-eyed son will be glorious. Having cast aside his rod and tranquil in his intelligence, even now, he resides on Mount Mahendra. The Siddhas, gandharvas and charanas sing about his conduct. In this way, the illustrious lord, Hari, the atman of the universe, descended in Bhrigu's lineage to remove the earth's heavy burden and killed many kings. Gadhi had an immensely energetic son who was like a fire that has been kindled. [1264] Through his austerities, he gave up his status as a kshatriya and obtained the radiance of a brahmana. O king! Vishvamitra had one hundred sons. Though the one in the middle was named Madhuchhanda, all of them are known as Madhuchhandas. He [1265] accepted Shunahshepa, who was born as Ajigarta's son in the Bhrigu lineage, as his son and told his sons to accept him as their elder brother. He [1266] was also known as Devarata. In Harishchandra's sacrifice, this man was sold as a sacrificial animal. He prayed to the gods and the lords of subjects and was released from his bondage of ropes. Since he was saved by the gods in a sacrifice, and destiny brought him to Gadhi's lineage, Shu-

nahshepa, actually born in Bhrigu's lineage, came to be known as Devarata. [1267] However, the sons older than Madhuchhanda were not ready to accept this. The sage angrily cursed them, "O wicked ones! You will be *mlechchha*s." [1268] With fifty others, Madhuchhanda said, "You know best. We will abide by whatever you decide. They told their elder, the one who knew about mantras, [1269] "We will follow you." Vishvamitra told these sons, "Since you accepted and honoured me, you have made me a father of brave sons and you will be the fathers of brave sons. O Kushikas! O brave ones! Devarata is like you. Follow him." He [1270] also had other sons—Ashtaka, Harita, Jaya, Kratumat and others. In this way, Vishvamitra divided the Koushika gotra and differentiated them into the superior and not so superior.'

Chapter 9(17)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Pururava had a son named Ayu and his sons were Nahusha, Kshatravriddha, Raji, the valiant Rambha and Anena. O Indra among kings! Now hear about the ones who followed Kshatravriddha. Kshatravriddha had a son named Suhotra and Suhotra had three sons—Kashya, Kusha and Gritsamada. Gritsamada's son was Shunaka and Shounaka [1271] was a sage who knew the best of the hymns. Kashya's son was Kashi, Kashi's son was Rashtra and Rashtra was the father of Dirghatama. Dirghatama had a son named Dhanvantari and he was the propounder of Ayurveda. He was born as a portion of Vasudeva, the enjoyer of sacrifices and the mere memory of whose name removes all afflictions. Dhanvantari's son was Ketuman and Ketuman's son was Bhimaratha. Bhimaratha's son was Divodasa, Divodasa's son was Dyuman and Dyuman's son is said to be Pratardana and he was also known as Shatrujit, Vatsa and Ritadhvaja. He was also named Kuvalayashva, and Alarka and others were his sons. O king! Other than Alarka, there was no one else who ruled the earth for sixty-six thousand years and still remained young. Alarka's son was Santati and Santati's son was Sunitha. Sunitha's son was Niketana,

Niketana's son was Dharmaketu, and Satyaketu was born from Dharmaketu. Satyaketu's son was Dhrishtaketu and Dhrishtaketu's son was Sukumara, the lord of the earth. His son was Vitihotra, Vitihotra's son was Bharga and Bharga's son, Bhargabhumi, became a king. In Kshatravriddha's lineage, these are the kings descended from Kashi. Rabhasa was Rambha's son, Rabhasa's son was Gambhira and Gambhira's son was Akriya, and Brahmavit was born from Akriya's gotra. Now hear about Anena's lineage. Anena's son was Shuddha, Shuddha's son was Shuchi and Shuchi's son was Trikakud, also known as Dharmasarathi. Dharmasarathi's son was Shantaraya, who knew about the atman and performed various rites. Raji had five hundred extremely energetic sons. Entreated by the gods, he [1272] killed daityas and handed over heaven to Indra. However, Indra was scared of Prahlada and the others. Therefore, he surrendered himself, clasped Raji's feet and gave it back to him. When their father died, he asked the sons [1273] to return it. However, they did not return heaven, though they gave the great Indra a share in the sacrifices. The preceptor [1274] offered oblations into the fire and Bala's slayer [1275] slew Raji's sons, who had deviated from the path. Not a single one was left. In Kshatravriddha's lineage, Prati was born as Kusha's son. Prati's son was Sanjaya and Sanjaya's son was Jaya. Jaya's son was Krita and Krita's son was King Haryavana. Haryavana's son was Sahadeva, Sahadeva's son was Hina and Heena's son was Jayasena. Jayasena's son was Samkriti, Samkriti's son was Jaya, a maharatha who followed the dharma of kshatriyas. The kings in Kshatravriddha's lineage have been described. Now hear about those descended from Nahusha's son.'

Chapter 9(18)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Like the senses in embodied beings, [1276] Nahusha had six sons—Yati, Yayati, Samyati, Ayati, Viyati and Kriti. Knowing about the consequences of accepting a kingdom, when his father offered it to him, Yati did not want it. He knew that once a man enters this state, he can no longer comprehend the atman. His father was dislodged from his status be-

cause he caused an offence to Indra. [1277] The brahmanas made him become a python. Therefore, Yayati became the king. He placed his four younger brothers in charge of the four directions and ruled the earth. He married the daughters of Kavya and Vrishaparva.' [1278]

The king asked, 'The illustrious Kavya was a brahmana rishi and Nahusha was a kshatra-bandhu. How did this *pratiloma* marriage [1279] between a royal descendant and a brahmana occur?'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'The Indra among the danavas had a garden that was full of flowering trees, the beautiful humming of bees, charming pools and sandy banks. Once, the lady and maiden named Sharmishtha, was roaming there, along with one thousand friends. This included Devayani, the beautiful daughter of the preceptor. Those lotus-eyed maidens approached a pool of water. They left their garments on the bank and sported there, splashing water on each other. They saw Girisha roaming around, astride his bull and accompanined by the goddess. [1280] Ashamed, the ladies quickly arose from the water and put on their garments. Unknowingly, Sharmishtha put on the garment that belonged to the preceptor's daughter, taking it to be her own. Angry, Devayani said, "Alas! Behold the unbecoming act of this servant maid. It was mine, but she has donned it, like a female dog that steals oblations from a sacrifice. We are the mouth of the supreme being and everything has been created through our austerities. We sustain his resplendence in this world and we are the ones who indicate the auspicious path. The guardians of the worlds and the lords of the gods abide by what we say. So does the illustrious and pure one, the atman of the universe and Shri's abode. Among them, we are descended from Bhrigu's lineage. Her father, the asura, is our disciple. Nevertheless, this unchaste one has donned my garment, like a shudra claiming the Vedas." Thus addressed, Sharmishtha was enraged. She sighed, like a female serpent that has been injured. Biting her lips, she addressed the preceptor's daughter. "O beggar! Not knowing your own status, why are you boasting a lot? Do you not wait in our house, like one who is searching for scraps?" [1281] Using such harsh words, Sharmishtha angrily took away the garment of the preceptor's virtuous daughter and flung her into a well. After she had returned to her own house,

Yayati was roaming around on a hunt. Wandering around as he willed, he came to the well in search of water and saw her. She was naked and the king gave her his own upper garment. Overcome by compassion, he held her hand in his hand and pulled her out. Ushanas's daughter was filled with trust and love and addressed him in these words. "O brave one! O king! O conqueror of enemy cities! You have held me by the hand. Since my hand has been grasped by you, no one else will accept my hand. O brave one! This relationship has been brought about by the lord and not by a human agency. Having fallen into the well, I caught sight of you. O mighty-armed one! Earlier, Kacha, Brihaspati's son, had cursed me that no brahmana would accept my hand." [1282] Yayati had not intended this, but thought that this had been brought about by destiny. Moreover, his heart was attracted to her. Therefore, he accepted her words. When the king had left, the patient one returned and, weeping, told her father everything that Sharmishtha had said and done. Distressed, the illustrious Kavya condemned life as a priest. Praising the subsistence followed by a pigeon, [1283] he left the city with his daughter. Vrishaparva got to know. Because of the prospect of his preceptor helping his adversaries, he stopped him along the way. He prostrated his head at his feet and placated him. The illustrious Bhargava's anger never lasted for a long time and he told his disciple, "O king! I cannot abandon her. [1284] Therefore, do what she wants." He said that he would act accordingly and Devayani told him what was in her mind. "When my father bestows me on someone, let her and her companions follow me." He perceived the danger to his relatives and therefore gave these words, that Sharmishtha and her companions should follow Devayani when she was bestowed by her father, with due importance. Like servant-maids, those one thousand women surrounded Devayani. Ushanas bestowed his daughter on Nahusha's son and also gave Sharmishtha. However, he said, "O king! Never allow Sharmishtha on your bed." O king! On one occasion, Sharmishtha saw that Ushanas's daughter delivered an excellent son. In private, the virtuous lady spoke to her friend's husband. The princess desired offspring and the one who knew about dharma reflected on dharma. [1285] Though he remembered Shukra's words, at the time, because of destiny, he accepted. De-

vayani gave birth to Yadu and Turvasu. Sharmishtha, Vrishaparva's daughter, gave birth to Druhyu, Anu and Puru. The proud Devayani got to know that the asura's daughter had conceived through her husband. Senseless with rage, she left for her father's house. Desiring her, he followed his beloved and sought to appease her through words. Unable to please her in this way, he tried things like massaging her feet.

'Shukra angrily said, "O false man! You lust after women. O evil-minded one! You will be overtaken by old age, which disfigures the bodies of men." Yayati replied, "O brahmana! My desire for your daughter has still not been satiated." The answer was, "As long as you still have desire left, in exchange, get youth from someone who is willing." Having obtained this arrangement, Yayati spoke to his eldest son, "O son! O Yadu! Accept this old age in your body and give me your youth. O child! Your maternal grandfather is the reason for this and I am not yet satisfied with material objects. Give me your youth, so that I can enjoy for a few more years." Yadu replied, "I am not interested in this old age, which you have obtained though you are middle-aged. Without knowing about carnal pleasures, there cannot be detachment in a man." [1286] O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The father urged Turvasu, Druhyu and Anu. However, they did not know about dharma. Their minds were such that they regarded temporary things as permanent. Therefore, they refused. At this, he asked his son Puru, who was younger in age, but superior in qualities. "O child! Like your elder brothers, you should not refuse me." Puru replied, "O Indra among men! In this world, a man obtains his own self because of his father and who is capable of repaying this? It is through his [1287] favours that one obtains what is best. A superior son acts after anticipating what his father wants. A middling son does what he is asked to do. An inferior son obeys reluctantly. A son who does not obey is like a father's excrement." Thus, Puru happily accepted his father's old age. O king! With this youth, he [1288] enjoyed himself, as he willed. He became the lord of the seven dvipas and protected the subjects properly, like a father. Without his senses being constrained in any way, he enjoyed material objects, as he wished. Devayani always brought him delight, with her mind, words, body and objects. She brought great

pleasure to her beloved and in private, he enjoyed himself with his beloved. He performed many yajnas and kratus to the lord of sacrifices, with copious quantities of dakshina. He worshipped the divinity Hari. He is in all the gods and all the gods are in him. He is the one who has created everything and is like the sky, with a large number of clouds. [1289] He is manifest in many different forms, but is also not manifest. He appears as if in a dream, in maya, or in wishes. He [1290] immersed his heart in Vasudeva, who is in the core of all hearts. With no particular object in mind, he worshipped the lord Narayana, who cannot be seen. In this way, the senses, and the mind as the sixth, enjoyed happiness for one thousand years. But despite doing this, the emperor was not satisfied.'

Chapter 9(19)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Yayati acted in this way, with desire for women clouding what was good for him. When he understood, he was disenchanted and recited this chant to his beloved. "O Bhargava's daughter! Listen to this chant about someone like me on earth. Patient people who reside in the forest and in the village lament his lot. In a forest, there was a goat that was searching for something it would like. It saw a she-goat that had fallen into a well as a result of her own karma. The goat was driven by lust and thought of a means to lift her up. He used the tips of his horns to dig up the edges, so that there would be a passage for her to emerge. After emerging from the well, the beautiful-hipped she-goat desired him. He was stout, bearded and excellent. His penis possessed strength and he was accomplished in sexual intercourse. On seeing this, many other beautiful she-goats also desired him as their beloved partner. That single ram increased sexual desire in many. Overwhelmed by desire, he found pleasure with them and did not understand himself. The she-goat that had suffered from falling into the well saw that her beloved was engaged in sexual intercourse and was enjoying himself with other she-goats. She could not tolerate this. She thought that the one who had appeared as a well-wisher was actually an ill-wisher. He was

lascivious and his friendship had lasted for a short while. Miserable, she gave up pleasure that comes from the senses and returned to her master. However, he was devoted to his wife and followed her, seeking to placate the unhappy one. Along the path, he bleated and did the other things that goats do. But he was unable to pacify her. Angry, the brahmana who was the she-goat's master severed the goat's testicles. Since he was skilled in yoga, he thereafter fixed the dangling testicles back again. O fortunate one! When his testicles had been fixed back, for a long period of time, the goat enjoyed himself with the she-goat who had been rescued from the well. Nevertheless, even today, after many days, his desire has not been satisfied. O one with the excellent eyebrows! Controlled by my love for you, I am as unhappy as that. Confounded by your maya, I have not realized my atman. If a man is destroyed by desire, all the grain, barley, gold, animals and women on earth are not capable of bringing pleasure to his mind. If desire has been generated, that desire is not pacified through enjoying objects. Like ghee offered to the one with the black trails, [1291] it is again kindled. If a man's sentiments are not like that, he does not cause injury to any living being. He is impartial towards everyone and all the directions are full of happiness for him. For evil-minded people, this is very difficult to give up. Even when the body is withered, it does not wither away. That thirst brings misery with it. If a person desires peace, he must swiftly give it up. In private, such a person must not sit on the same seat with a mother, a sister or a daughter. The aggregate of the senses is powerful and can make even a learned person deviate. I have continuously served material objects for one thousand years. Nevertheless, after enjoying them, the thirst for them continues to increase. Therefore, I will give all this up and turn my mind to meditating on the brahman. I will be without opposite pairs of sentiments. Without any ahamkara, I will roam around with animals. Everything that is seen or heard is temporary. Comprehending this, one should not think about them, or enjoy them. The cycle of samsara destroys the atman. A person who is learned in this way realizes the atman." Nahusha's son told his wife this. He returned the youth to Puru and got back his own old age. He was devoid of any desires.

‘The lord gave the south-eastern direction to Druhyu, the southern direction to Yadu, the western direction to Turvasu and the northern direction to Anu. He consecrated Puru, the best among them all, over the entire surface of the earth and the subjects, asking his elders to remain obedient to him. He then went to the forest. For a very large number of years, he had served the six [1292] and material objects. Like a bird leaving the nest when its feathers have grown, in an instant, he freed himself from all this. There, he was completely freed from all kinds of association. Cleansed of the three attributes, [1293] he realized the atman. He was absorbed in the unblemished brahman and realized the destination obtained by a devotee of the illustrious Vasudeva. Hearing the song, [1294] Devayani thought that it was meant to persuade her to realize the atman and was not merely a story recounted affectionately in casual conversation and jest between a man and a woman. She realized that this residence with relatives was controlled by the lord and was fashioned by the lord’s maya. It was like those who go to a watering hole. [1295] This was like a dream. Therefore, Bhargava’s daughter gave up all attachment. Immersing her mind in Krishna, she gave up the manifestations of the atman. [1296] I bow down to the illustrious Vasudeva, the creator of everything. He resides in all creatures. I bow down to the great and tranquil one.’

Chapter 9(20)

Shri-Shuka said, ‘O descendant of the Bharata lineage! I will now tell you about Puru’s lineage, the one you are descended from. Royal sages were born in this line and so were brahmanas who started their own lineages. Puru’s son was Janamejaya and his son was Prachinvan. Prachinvan’s son was Pravira, Pravira’s son was Namasyu and Namasyu’s son was Charupada. Charupada’s son was Sudyu, Sudyu’s son was Bahugava and Bahugava’s son was Samyati. Samyati’s son was Ahamyati and it is said that Ahamyati’s son was Roudrashva. Through the apsara Ghritachi, Roudrashva had ten sons—Riteyu, Kuksheyu, Sthandileyu, Kriteyu, Jaleyu, San-

nateyu, Dharmeyu, Satyetu, Vrateyu and Vaneyu as the youngest. This is just like the ten senses [1297] being evolved from the mouth of the one who is the atman of the universe. O king! Riteyu had a son named Rantibhara and he had three sons—Sumati, Dhruva and Apratiratha. Kanva was Apratiratha's son. Kanva's son was Medhatithi, whose sons were Praskanna and other brahmanas. Sumati had a son named Raibhya and it is held that Dushyanta was his son.

'Having gone on a hunt, Dushyanta went to Kanva's hermitage. He saw a lady seated there. She was like Rama [1298] and illuminated everything with her own radiance. On seeing her, he was instantly smitten, as if by divine maya. Though he was surrounded by some of his soldiers, he spoke to that beautiful lady. He was delighted to see her and all his exhaustion was gone. Tormented by desire, he smiled and asked her in gentle words. "O lotus-eyed one! Who are you? O one who pleases the heart! Whom do you belong to? Why are you in this desolate forest? What do you desire? O one with the excellent waist! I can see that you are evidently the daughter of a king. The minds of those from Puru's lineage are never attracted towards something that constitutes adharma." Shakuntala replied, "I am Vishvamitra's daughter and have been abandoned by Menaka in the forest. [1299] The illustrious Kanva knows all this. O brave one! What can we do for you? O lotus-eyed one! Be seated here and accept whatever we offer you. Enjoy this wild rice. If it pleases you, reside here." Dushyanta said, "O one with the excellent eyebrows! Since you have been born in Kushika's lineage, this is worthy of you. Maidens born in royal lineages themselves choose a groom who is their equal." The king knew about the rules for the time and the place. When she said "Oum", [1300] following the dharma of gandharva rituals, he married Shakuntala. [1301] The royal sage's semen was potent and he deposited his semen in his queen. Next morning, he left for his own city. In course of time, she delivered a son. In the forest, Kanva performed all the rites for the boy. The boy was so strong that he could seize a lion, bind it and play with it. His valour was impossible to resist and he was born as Hari's portion. Taking him with her, the excellent woman went to her husband. However, the king did not accept his wife and son, both of whom

were unblemished. All the creatures then heard an invisible voice speak from the sky. "O Dushyanta! A mother is a mere receptacle. [1302] A son belongs to the father from whom he has been born. Nurture your son. Do not insult Shakuntala. O divinity among men! A son belongs to the person whose semen it was and he delivers from Yama's abode. You are the origin of the foetus and Shakuntala has spoken the truth." When his father left for the other world, he became an extremely illustrious chakravarti. He was born from Hari's portion and his greatness is sung about on earth. He possessed the sign of a chakra on his right palm and the mark of a lotus on the soles of his feet. The lord was consecrated as an emperor at a mahabhisheka and performed sacrifices. With Mamata's son [1303] as the priest, he performed fifty-five horse sacrifices along the course of the Ganga. Along the course of the Yamuna, he performed seventy-eight horse sacrifices. Tying the horses there, he donated riches. The altars for the sacrificial fires of Bharata, Dushyanta's son, were erected at excellent spots. Each brahmana received his share of one thousand *badva*s of cows. [1304] Binding one hundred and thirty three horses for sacrifices, he astounded the kings. The prosperity of Dushyanta's son surpassed even that of the gods. No former king could achieve the greatness of Bharata's deeds, nor will any king do so in the future, just as it is impossible to achieve heaven through the strength of one's arms. In conquests, he killed all the Kiratas, Hunas, Yavanas, Andhras, Kankas, Khashas, Shakas and mlechchha kings who were against brahmanas. Earlier, the asuras had vanquished the gods and had dispatched the celestial women to rasatala. He defeated them and took them [1305] and their loved ones away from rasatala, restoring their original states. At that time, the subjects could milk heaven and earth for all the objects of desire. He ruled for twenty-seven thousand years and his wheel was unrestrained in every direction.

'He was an emperor who was known as the guardian of the worlds. The emperor possessed opulence and prosperity. His wheel was unrestrained. But since everything to do with life was unreal, he no longer enjoyed it. O king! He had three revered wives, all from Vidarbha. However, they considered that the sons who were born from him did not resemble him. There-

fore, they killed them. [1306] When he [1307] saw that his lineage was being destroyed, for the sake of a son, he performed a sacrifice to the Maruts and the Maruts presented Bharadvaja to him. When his brother's wife [1308] was pregnant, Brihaspati tried to have intercourse with her. The foetus that was inside prevented him. He released his semen, cursing the foetus which was trying to prevent the act. Mamata wished to abandon the child, [1309] scared that her husband would cast her away because of this. However, the gods made them utter a shloka, giving a name to the child. Brihaspati said, "O foolish lady! Nurture this child, he has been born from both of us." [1310] Mamata replied, "O Brihaspati! Nurture this child, he has been born from both of us." Saying this, both mother and father abandoned him and he came to be known as Bharadvaja. Though the gods urged them, they were both of the view that this son was of no use. When his [1311] lineage was going to be destroyed, the Maruts bestowed this child, whom they had nurtured, on him.'

Chapter 9(21)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Vitatha [1312] had a son named Manu. Manu's sons were Brihatkshatra, Jaya, Mahavirya, Garga and Nara. Nara's son was Samkriti. O descendant of the Pandu lineage! Samkriti's sons were Guru and Rantideva. Rantideva's greatness is chanted about, in this world and in the next. He gave away whatever riches came to him by chance. Without anything, the hungry one suffered, along with his family. Forty-eight days passed without his being able to drink water. In the morning, ghee, payasam, *samyava* [1313] and water presented itself before him by chance. With his family, he was hungry and thirsty, afflicted and trembling. They were about to eat. But at that time, an atithi brahmana arrived. He saw Hari everywhere. Therefore, full of devotion and respect, he gave him a share of the food. Having eaten, the brahmana left. O lord of the earth! When they were about to eat what was left and had been shared out, a vrishala arrived. Remembering Hari, he gave him a share too. After the shudra had left, another atithi arrived, sur-

rounded by dogs. He said, “O king! Give me and my companions some food. We are hungry.” The lord received him with a great deal of respect and honour and gave him whatever was left, bowing down to the dogs and the master of the dogs. Only the water was left and just enough to satisfy one person. When they were about to drink, a pulkasa arrived and said, “Though I am inauspicious, give it to me.” He heard the pitiful words of the one who was extremely exhausted. Filled with compassion and greatly tormented, he addressed him in words that were like amrita. “I do not desire a supreme status from the lord, the eight kinds of powers, [1314] or freedom from rebirth. Let me remain inside all embodied beings and undergo their sufferings, so that they become free of miseries. He [1315] is suffering from hunger, thirst and exhaustion. My body is trembling. I am miserable and distressed. I am suffering from grief, unhappiness and confusion. He wants to remain alive. By giving him water and saving his life, all my sorrows will vanish.” The king was naturally patient and kind. Though he was about to die because he was thirsty, he said this and gave the water to the pulkasa. The lords of the three worlds can bestow all the fruits on those who desire these fruits. Fashioned by Vishnu’s maya, they had manifested themselves before him in those forms [1316] and now presented themselves. Without any desire and free of attachment, he bowed down before them. Filled with devotion, his mind was on the supreme and illustrious Vasudeva. His mind’s support was the lord and he desired nothing else. O king! Like a dream, maya, consisting of the gunas, vanished before him. Those who followed Rantideva acquired similar sentiments because of their association. All these yogis became devoted to Narayana.

‘Garga’s son was Shini and Shini’s son was Gargya. Thus, the lineage of a brahmana originated from that of a kshatriya. Mahavirya’s son was Duritakshya and his sons were Trayyaruni, Kavi and Pushkararuni. They obtained the status of brahmanas. Brihadkshatra’s son was Hasti, who built Hastinapura. Hasti’s sons were Ajamidha, Dvimidha and Purumidha. Ajamidha’s descendants were Priyamedha and other brahmanas. Ajamidha had another son, Brihadishu and his son was Brihaddhanu. Brihaddhanu’s son was Brihatkaya and his son was Jayadratha. Jayadratha’s son was

Vishada and Vishada's son was Senajit. Senajit's sons were Ruchirashva, Dridhahanu, Kashya and Vatsa. Ruchirashva's son was Para and Para's son was Prithusena. Para had a son named Nipa and Nipa had one hundred sons. Through Kritvi, Shuka's daughter, Nipa had Brahmadatta as a son. Through his wife, Gau, this yogi had a son named Vishvaksena. Through the advice of Jaigishavya, Vishvaksena composed a treatise on yoga. Vishvaksena's son was Udakshvana and Udakshvana's son was Bhallada. These are known as Brihadishu's descendants. Dvimidha's son was Yavinara and Yavinara's son was known as Kritiman. Kritiman's son was named Satyadhriti, Satyadhriti's son was Dridhanemi and Dridhanemi's son was Suparshva. Suparshva's son was Sumati and Sumati's son was Sannati. Sannati's son was Kriti. Having used yoga to obtain them from Hiranyanabha, he composed six earlier Samhitas of the Sama Veda. Kriti's son was Nipa and Nipa's son was Ugrayudha. Ugrayudha's son was Kshemya, Kshemya's son was Suvira and Suvia's son was Ripunjaya. Ripunjaya's son was known as Bahuratha. Purumidha did not have any sons. Through his wife Nalini, Ajamidha had Nila as a son and Nila's son was Shanti. Shanti's son was Sushanti, Sushanti's son was Puruja and Puruja's son was Arka. Arka's son was Bharmyashva. Beginning with Mudgala, Bharmyashva had five sons. The others were Yavinara, Brihadishu, Kampilya and Sanjaya. Bharmyashva said, "O sons! These five can protect my kingdom. They were thus known as Panchalas. [1317] From Mudgala evolved the gotra of brahmanas known as Moudgalya. Bharmyashva's son, Mudgala, had twins as offspring. The male was Divodasa and the daughter was Ahalya. Through Goutama, she had Shatananda as a son. Shatananda's son was Satyadhriti and he was accomplished in *dhanurveda*. His son was Sharadvan. When he saw Urvashi, he released his semen on a clump of reeds and an auspicious couple was produced from this. When Shantanu went on a hunt, he was overcome by compassion at seeing them and accepted them. The boy was Kripa and the daughter was Kripi, Drona's wife.'

Chapter 9(22)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O king! Divodasa's son was Mitrayu and Mitrayu's sons were Chyavana, Sudasa, Sahadeva and Somaka. Somaka had one hundred sons. Jantu was the oldest and Prishata was the youngest son. Prishata's son was Drupada, who possessed every kind of prosperity. Drupada's daughter was Droupadi and Dhrishtadyumna and others were his sons. Dhrishtadyumna's son was Dhrishtaketu. These descendants of Bharmyashva are known as Panchalakas. [1318]

'Ajamidha had another son, Riksha, and Riksha's son was Samvarana. Through Tapati, Surya's daughter, Samvarana's son was Kuru, the lord of Kurukshetra. Kuru's sons were Parikshit, Sudhanu, Jahnu and Nishadashva. Sudhanu's son was Suhotra, Suhotra's son was Chyavana and Chyavana's son was Kriti, Uparichara Vasu's father. The foremost among Uparichara Vasu's sons was Brihadratha. Of the others, Kushamba, Matsya, Pratyagra and Chedipa were the rulers of Chedi. Brihadratha's son was Kushagra and Kushagra's son was Rishabha. Rishabha's son was Satyahita, Satyahita's son was Pushpavan and Pushpavan's son was Jahu. Through another wife, Brihadratha had a son who was born in two parts. When his mother threw him away, Jara playfully joined the two parts and said, "Live! Live!" The son named Jarasandha resulted. [1319] Jarasandha's son was Sahadeva, Sahadeva's son was Somapi and Somapi's son was Shrutashrava. Shrutashrava's son, Parikshit, had no offspring. Jahnu's son was Suratha. Suratha's son was Viduratha and Viduratha's son was Sarvabhouma. Sarvabhouma's son was Jayasena, Jayasena's son was Radhika and Radhika's son was Ayuta. Ayuta's son was Krodhana, Krodhana's son was Devatithi, Devatithi's son was Rishya, Rishya's son was Dilipa and Dilipa's son was Pratipa. Pratipa's sons were Devapi, Shantanu and Bahlika. Abandoning his father's kingdom, Devapi went to the forest. Shantanu, who had formerly been known as Mahabhisha, became the king. When he touched anything with his hands, even if it happened to be old, became young. Since everything obtained peace [1320] through the touch of his hands, he became Shantanu. The lord did not rain down in his kingdom for twelve years. The brahmanas told Shantanu, "By enjoying what belongs to your elder brother, you have become a

parivetta. [1321] For the prosperity of the city and the kingdom, quickly give the kingdom to your elder brother." Thus addressed by the brahmanas, he requested his elder brother. However, he replied, "You have been urged by your ministers and brahmanas to deviate from the words of the Vedas. They only speak a lot." [1322] At this, the god showered down. Resorting to yoga, Devapi resides in Kalapagrama. When the lunar dynasty is destroyed in kali yuga, at the beginning of krita yuga, he will establish it again. Bahlika's son was Somadatta. Somadatta had three sons—Bhuri, Bhurishrava and Shala. Through Ganga, Shantanu's son was Bhishma, who was in control of his atman. He was best among those who know all kinds of dharma. He was wise and a great devotee of the illustrious one. Among the collection of heroes, he was the foremost. He even satisfied Rama [1323] in an encounter. Through the daughter of a *dasha*, Shantanu had a son named Chitrangada, the younger son was Vichitravirya. [1324] Chitrangada was killed by a gandharva named Chitrangada.

'Through her, [1325] Parashara had a son who was Hari's portion himself. This was the sage Krishna, the protector of the Vedas. I have studied this [1326] from him. The illustrious Badarayana ignored his own disciples, Paila and the others. I, his son, am serene. Therefore, he instructed me about this supreme secret. Both Ambika and Ambalika, the daughters of the king of Kashi, were forcibly abducted from their svayamvara. [1327] Vichitravirya married them. His heart was attached to them. However, he had tuberculosis and died. Badarayana was instructed by his mother to generate offspring from his brother's kshetra. Dhritarashtra, Pandu and Vidura were born in this way. O king! Through Gandhari, Dhritarashtra had one hundred sons. Duryodhana was the eldest among them and the daughter was Duhshala. Because of a curse, Pandu was prohibited from sexual intercourse. Through his wife, Kunti, and Dharma, Anila [1328] and Indra, he had three maharatha sons. Yudhishthira was the foremost. Through the Nasatyas, Madri had Nakula and Sahadeva as sons. Through her five husbands, Droupadi had five sons. They were your fathers. Prativindhya was Yudhishthira's son, Shrutasena was Vrikodara's son, Shrutakirti was Arjuna's son, Shatanika was Nakula's son and Shrutakarma was Sahadeva's son. There were other

sons too. Through Pouravi, Yudhishthira had Devaka, through Hidimba Bhimasena had Ghatotkacha and through Kali, Bhimasena had Sarvagata. Through Vijaya, Parvata's daughter, Sahadeva had Suhotra. Through Karenumati, Nakula had Naramitra. Arjuna had Iravan through Ulupi and Babhruvahana through the daughter of the lord of Manipura. Since he was the son of a *putrika*, he was regarded as a son. [1329] Your father, Abhimanyu, was Subhadra's son. He was brave and defeated all the *atiratha*s. [1330] You were born through him and Uttara. When the Kuru lineage was about to be exterminated because of the energy of the *brahmastra* weapon of Drona's son, you were saved from death and made alive through Krishna's favours.

'O son! You have four sons. Janamejaya is the eldest and the others are Shrutasena, Bhimasena and the valiant Ugrasena. Knowing that you have died because of Takshaka, Janamejaya will be angry. He will perform a snake sacrifice, at which, snakes will be offered as oblations into the fire. He will appoint Tura, Kavasha's son, as the priest and perform sacrifices. He will perform horse sacrifices and conquer the earth in every direction. His son will be Shatanika, who will study the three [1331] from Yajnavalkya. He will obtain knowledge of weapons and knowledge of rituals. He will learn about the supreme from Shounaka. His son will be Sahasranika, Sahasranika's son will be Ashvamedhaja, Ashvamedhaja's son will be Asimakrishna and Asimakrishna's son will be Nemichakra. When Gajasahvya [1332] will be flooded by the river, the virtuous one will reside in Koushambi. His son will be Chitraratha and Chitraratha's son will be Kaviratha. His son will be Vrishtiman and Vrishtiman's son will be King Mahipati. His son will be Sunitha. Sunitha's son will be Nrichakshu and Nrichakshu's son will be Sukhinala. Sukhinala's son will be Pariplava, Pariplava's son will be Sunaya, Sunaya's son will be Nripanjaya, Nripanjaya's son will be Durva and Durva's son will be Timi. Timi's son will be Brihadratha, Brihadratha's son will be Sudasa, Sudasa's son will be Shatanika, Shatanika's son will be Durdamana and Durdamana's son will be Mahinara. His son will be Dandapani and Dandapani's son will be Nimi. Nimi's son will be Kshemaka. The brahmana and kshatriya lineages, revered by gods and rishis, will result in this way. In kali yuga, when Kshemaka becomes the king, this lineage will

end. I will now tell you about the future kings of Magadha. Sahadeva's son will be Marjari, Marjari's son will be Shrutashrava, Shrutashrava's son will be Ayutayu, Ayutayu's son will be Niramitra, Niramitra's son will be Sunakshatra, Sunakshatra's son will be Brihatsena, Brihatsena's son will be Karmajit, Karmajit's son will be Sritanjaya, Sritanjaya's son will be Vipra and Vipra's son will be Shuchi. Shuchi's son will be Kshema, Kshema's son will be Suvrata, Suvrata's son will be Dharmasutra, Dharmasutra's son will be Sama, Sama's son will be Dyumatsena, Dyumatsena's son will be Sumati and Subali will be born from Sumati. Subali's son will be Sunitha, Sunitha's son will be Satyajit, Satyajit's son will be Vishvajit and Vishvajit's son will be Ripunjaya. The kings of the Brihadratha lineage will rule for one thousand years.'

Chapter 9(23)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Anu [1333] had three sons—Sabhanara, Chakshu and Paroksha. Sabhanara's son was Kalanara and Kalanara's son was Srinjaya. His son was Janamejaya, Janamejaya's son was Mahashala and Mahashala's son was Mahamana. Ushinara and Titikshu were the sons of Mahamana. Ushinara's four sons were Shibi, Vana, Shami and Daksha. Shibi had four sons—Vrishadarbha, Sudhira, Madra and Kaikeya. In this way, Titikshu's son was Rushadratha, Rushadratha's son was Hema and Hema's son was Sutapa. Bali was born from Sutapa. In King Bali's kshetra, Dirghatama had Anga, Vanga and Kalinga as sons and also those known as Suhma, Pundra and Andhra. In the east, these six ruled over kingdoms that were known by their own names. Anga had a son named Khanapana and Khanapana's son was Diviratha. Diviratha's son was Chitraratha, who had no offspring. He was also known as Romapada and his friend, Dasharatha, gave him his own daughter, Shanta. He bestowed her on Rishyashringa, who married her. When the god did not shower down, beautiful women brought that son of a deer, [1334] tempting him with singing, dancing, musical instruments, seductions, embraces and worship. To obtain offspring, the

king [1335] performed a sacrifice to the lord of the Maruts. [1336] He obtained offspring, just as Dasharatha, who was without offspring, obtained offspring. Romapada's son was Chaturanga and Chaturanga's son was Prithulaksha. Prithulaksha's sons were Brihadratha, Brihatkarma and Brihadbhanu. The first had a son named Brihanmana and Jayadratha was born from him. Through Sambhuti, Jayadratha had a son named Vijaya. Vijaya's son was Dhriti, Dhriti's son was Dhritavrata, Dhritavrata's son was Satkarma and Satkarma's son was Adhiratha. When he [1337] was sporting on the banks of the Ganga, he found an infant in a basket. The child had been abandoned by Kunti, since she was not married then. Being without offspring, he brought him up as his son. [1338] Karna's son was Vrishasena and he became a lord of the earth.

'Druhyu's [1339] son was Babhru, Babhru's son was Setu, Setu's son was Arabdha, Arabdha's son was Gandhara, Gandhara's son was Dharma, Dharma's son was Dhrita, Dhrita's son was Durmana and Durmana's son was Pracheta. Pracheta had one hundred sons. These sons were the lords of the mlechchha regions and resided in the northern direction.

'Turvasu's [1340] son was Vahni, Vahni's son was Bhaga and Bhaga's son was Bhanuman. Bhanuman's son was Tribhanu and Tribhanu's son was the generous Karandhama. Karandhama's son was Marut. Since Marut was without any sons, he adopted a son from the Puru lineage. [1341] Desiring the kingdom that belonged to his own lineage, Dushyanta returned there.

'I will now describe the lineage of Yadu. If a man hears this, he is freed from all sins. This is extremely sacred and destroys all the sins of men. Assuming human form, the illustrious paramatman adopted the form of an avatara in this. It is said that Yadu had four sons—Sahasrajit, Kroshta, Nala and Ripu. The son of the eldest was Shatajit. Shatajit's sons were Mahahaya, Renuhaya and Haihaya. Haihaya's son was Dharma and Dharma's son was Netra and Netra was the father of Kunti. [1342] Kunti's son was Sohanji, Sohanji's son was Mahishman and Mahishman's son was Bhadrasenaka. Bhadrasena's [1343] sons were Durmada and Dhanaka. Dhanaka's sons were Kritavirya, Kritagni, Kritavarma and Kritouja. Kritavirya's son was Arjuna, the lord of the seven dvipas. From Dattatreya, born as Hari's por-

tion, he obtained the great qualities of yoga. No other kings could follow the path traversed by Kartavirya, [1344] in sacrifices, donations, austerities, yoga, learning, valour, compassion and other traits. Indeed, he enjoyed unrestricted prowess for eighty-five thousand years. He enjoyed undecayed prosperity and memory and the satisfaction of the six [1345] was unmitigated. He had one thousand sons. However, after the battle, [1346] only five remained alive—Jayadhvaja, Shurasena, Vrishabha, Madhu and Urjita. Jayadhvaja's son was Talajangha, who had one hundred sons. The kshatriyas known as Talajanghas were destroyed by the energy of Ourva. [1347] Among these sons, Vitihotra was the eldest. Vitihotra's son was known as Madhu and Madhu's son was Vrishni. Out of Madhu's one hundred sons, Vrishni was the eldest. Therefore, the lineage came to be known after his name. O king! They are known as Madhavas, Vrishnis or Yadavas.

'Yadu's son, Kroshta, had a son named Vrijinavan. His son was Svahi and Svahi's son was Rusheku. Rusheku's son was Chitraratha. The great and glorious yogi, the immensely fortunate Shashabindu, was born to Chitraratha. He was an unvanquished chakravarti and possessed fourteen jewels. [1348] He had ten thousand wives. Through each, he had ten immensely illustrious sons. Thus, he had one million sons. Among these sons, six were prominent. The one known as Prithushrava had a son named Dharma and Dharma's son was Ushanas, who performed one hundred horse sacrifices. Ushanas had a son named Ruchaka. Ruchaka had five sons, known as Purujit, Rukma, Rukmeshu, Prithu and Jyamagha. Hear about them. Jyamagha's wife was Shaibya. She was childless. However, scared of her, Shaibya's husband did not marry again. Once, from an enemy's house, he brought a woman who was meant for enjoyment. [1349] On seeing her on the chariot, Shaibya became angry with her husband. "O cheat! Who is this, on my place in the chariot?" "This is your daughter-in-law," was the reply. Smiling, Shaibya told her husband, "I am barren. Nor do I have a co-wife. How can she be my daughter-in-law?" "O queen! You will give birth and she will be suitable then." He had caused delight to the vishvadevas and the ancestors, who approved. Therefore, in the course of time, Shaibya conceived

and gave birth to an auspicious son. He was known as Vidarbha and married the lady who had been accepted as a daughter-in-law.'

Chapter 9(24)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Through her, Vidarbha had two sons named Kusha and Kratha. There was a third named Romapada, a delight of the Vidarbha lineage. Romapada's son was Babhru and Babhru's son was Kriti. Kriti's son was Ushika. Ushika's son was Chedi and the kings of Chedi were descended through him. Kratha's son was Kunti, [1350] Kunti's son was Dhrishti and Dhrishti's son was Nivriti. Nivriti's son was Dasharha and his son was Vyoma. Vyoma's son was Jimuta, Jimuta's son was Vikriti, Vikriti's son was Bhimaratha, Bhimaratha's son was Navaratha and Navaratha's son was Dasharatha. Dasharatha's son was Shakuni, Shakuni's son was Karambhi, Karambhi's son was Devarata, Devarata's son was Devakshatra, Devakshatra's son was Madhu, Madhu's son was Kuruvasha and Kuruvasha's son was Anu. Anu's son was Puruhotra, Puruhotra's son was Ayu and Ayu's son was Satvata. O revered one! Satvata had seven sons—Bhajamana, Bhaji, Divya, Vrishni, Devavridha, Andhaka and Mahabhoja. Through one wife, Bhajamana had the sons Nimlochi, Kimkina and Dhrishti. O lord! Through another wife, he had three sons—Shatajit, Sahasrajit and Ayutajit. Devavridha's son was Babhru. About them, [1351] a shloka is read. "Whatever is heard about them from a distance, is what is seen at close quarters. Babhru is best among men and Devavridha is like the gods. Through Babhru and Devavridha, fourteen thousand and sixty-five men have obtained immortality." Mahabhoja was exceedingly devoted to dharma. Those in his lineage are known as the Bhojas.

'O scorcher of enemies! Vrishni's son was Sumitra, Sumitra's son was Yudhajit, Yudhajit's son was Shini, Shini's son was Anamitra and Anamitra's son was Nimna. Nimna's two sons were Satrajit and Prasena. Anamitra had another son known as Shini and his son was Satyaka. Satyaka's son was Yuyudhana, [1352] Yuyudhana's son was Jaya, Jaya's son was Kuni and Kuni's

son was Yugandhara. Anamitra had another son known as Vrishni. Vrishni's sons were Shvaphalaka and Chitraratha. Through Gandini, Shvaphalaka had twelve famous sons and also Akrura as foremost among them. The others were Asanga, Sarameya, Mridura, Mriduvid, Giri, Dharmavriddha, Sukarma, Kshetrapeksha, Arimardana, Shatrughna, Gandhamada and Pratibahu as the twelfth. Their sister was known as Suchara. Akrura also had two sons, Devavana and Upadeva. Chitraratha's sons were Prithu, Vidura and many others. All of them extended the delight of the Vrishni lineage. There were Kukura, Bhajamana, Shuchi and Kambalabarhisha. [1353] Kukura's son was Vahni, Vahni's son was Viloma, Viloma's son was Kapotaroma and Kapotaroma's son was Anu, Tumburu's friend. [1354] Anu's son was Andhaka, Andhaka's son was Dundubhi, Dundubhi's son was Aridyota and Aridyota's son was Punarvasu. Punarvasu's son was Ahuka and his daughter was Ahuki. Ahuka's sons were Devaka and Ugrasena. Devaka had four sons—Devavan, Upadeva, Sudeva and Devavardhana. O king! They had seven sisters, Dhritadevaa and others. These others were Shantidevaa, Upadevaa, Shridevaa, Devarakshitaa, Sahadevaa and Devaki. Vasudeva married them all. The sons of Ugrasena were Kamsa, Sunama, Nyagrodha, Kanka, Shanku, Suhu, Rashtrapala, Dhrishti and Tushtiman. Ugrasena's daughters were Kamsaa, Kamsavati, Kankaa, Shurabhu and Rashtrapalikaa. They were the wives of Vasudeva's younger brothers. Viduratha's [1355] son was Shura, Shura's son was Bhajamana, Bhajamana's son was Shini, Shini's son was Svayambhoja and it is said that Svyambhoja's son was Hridika. Hridika's sons were Devamida, Shatadhanu and Kritavarma. Devamidha's son was Shura and his wife was named Marisha. Through her, he had ten unblemished sons—Vasudeva, Devabhaga, Devashrava, Anaka, Srinjaya, Shyamaka, Kanka, Shamika, Vatsaka and Vrika. Vasudeva, Hari's father and origin, is spoken of as Anakadundubhi, because kettledrums and larger drums of the gods were sounded at the time of his birth. [1356] Their sisters were Pritha, Shrutadevaa, Shrutakirti, Shrutashravaa and Rajadhidevi. These sisters were the five daughters.

'Since his friend Kunti had no offspring, her father [1357] bestowed Pritha on him. [1358] Having satisfied Durvasa, she obtained from him the knowledge

of summoning the gods. To test the power of this, she summoned the pure sun god. She was astounded in her mind when she saw the god instantly arrive. "O god! I used the mantra only to test it. Please pardon me and leave." "O slender-waisted one! The sight of the gods is never futile. I will give you a son. However, I will also act so that your virginity remains intact." Thus, the sun god impregnated her womb and returned to the firmament. A son was immediately born and he was like a second sun. Scared of people, with difficulty, she abandoned him in the water of the river. Your great-grandfather Pandu, for whom truth was his valour, married her.

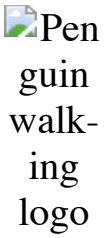
'Vriddhasharma of Karusha married Shrutadevaa. Dantavakra was born from her. He had earlier been Diti's son, [1359] but had been cursed by the rishis. Dhrishtaketu of Kekaya married Shrutakirti and had five sons in the Kekaya lineage, Santardana and others. Through Rajadhidevi, Jayasena had two sons who were the kings of Avanti. [1360] Damaghosha, the king of Chedi, married Shrutashravaa. Shishupala was her son. That is how his birth is described. Through Kamsaa, Devabhaga had two sons—Chitraketu and Brihadbala. Through Kamsavati, Devashrava had two sons—Suvira and Ishuman. Through Kankaa, Anaka had Satyajit and Purujit as sons. Through Rashtrapali, [1361] Srinjaya had Vrisha, Durmarshana and others as sons. Through Shurabhumi, Shyamaka had Harikesha and Hiranyaksha as sons. Through the apsara named Mishrakeshi, Vatsaka had Vrika and other sons. Through Durvakshi, Vrika had Taksha, Pushkara, Shala and others as sons. Through Sudamini, Shamika had Sumitra, Arjunapala and other sons. Through Karnika, Kanka had Ritadhaman and Jaya as sons.

'The wives of Anakadundubhi were Pouravi, Rohini, Bhadra, Madira, Rochana, Ila and Devaki, Devaki being the foremost. [1362] Through Rohini, Vasudeva had Bala, Gada, Sarana, Durmada, Vipula, Dhruva, Krita and other sons. Through Pouravi, his sons were Subhadra, Bhadrabahu, Durmada and others, starting with Bhuta. There were twelve in all. Through Madira, his sons were Nanda, Upananda, Kritaka, Shura and others. Koushalya [1363] had one son, Keshi, and he was a delight of the lineage. Through Rochana were born Hasta, Hemangada and others. Through Ila were born Uruvalka and others. They were foremost in the Yadu lineage. Through Dhritadevaa,

Anakadundubhi had only one son—Viprishtha. O king! Through Shantidevaa, the sons were Shrama, Pratishruta and others. Through Upadevaa, he had ten kings as sons—Kalpavarsha and others. Through Shridevaa, he had six sons—Vasu, Hamsa, Suvamsha and others. Through Devarakshitaa, he had nine sons—Gada and others. Through Sahadevaa, Vasudeva had eight sons. Among these, Puruvishruta was the foremost. Just as Dharma gave birth to the Vasus, [1364] through Devaki, Vasudeva had eight sons. They were Kirtimat, Sushena, the generous Bhadrasena, Riju, Sammardana, Bhadra and Samkarshana, the lord of serpents. [1365] The eighth was indeed the lord Hari himself. O king! Your grandmother, the immensely fortunate Subhadra, was their daughter. Whenever there is a decline in dharma and wickedness prospers, at that time, the lord and illustrious Hari creates himself. [1366] O lord of the earth! There is no other reason behind his birth or deeds. This is the lord's own maya. He is the supreme atman who witnesses everything. It is his maya that leads to the creation, preservation and destruction of beings. It is through his favours that there is existence and one obtains nivritti and realization of the atman. The lords of the akshouhinis were asuras who were unfit to be kings. They attacked themselves and he sought to reduce the burden of the earth. With Samkarshana, the illustrious Madhusudana performed immeasurable deeds that even the minds of the gods cannot comprehend. As favour to his devotees, he extended his extremely auspicious fame and removed the grief and misery of those who will be born in kali yuga. [1367] His sacred fame is the supreme of tirthas. If a person uses his ears like hands joined in salutation and touches and hears this nectar with his ears, all his desire for karma is instantly destroyed. [1368] His deeds were eternally praised by the Bhojas, Vrishnis, Andhakas, Madhus, Shurasenas, Dasharhas, Kurus, Srinjayas and Pandus. The valour of his pastimes was marked by gentle glances and generous words. The world of men was delighted with his form, charming in all its limbs. His face was beautiful, with earrings shaped like makaras. His ears were beautiful. His cheeks were radiant. His dalliant smiles indicated his excellent prosperity, as if there were continuous festivities. The eyes were not satisfied at drinking him in. Men and women were delighted and became angry with Nimi.

[1369] After being born, he went from his father's house to Vraja, so as to enhance its prosperity. He killed the enemies. He had many wives and through them, he had hundreds of sons. Following the rituals, he worshipped himself through sacrifices and spread these principles among people. To remove the earth's great burden, he used his glances to destroy and cleanse the Kurus by creating dissension in their minds, also destroying the armies of the kings in the battle. He then announced the victory as if it was Jaya's. [1370] Instructing Uddhava about supreme knowledge, he then returned to his own abode.'

This ends the Ninth Skandha.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Tenth Skandha

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Chapter 10(1)

The king said, 'You have described the solar and lunar dynasties in detail and also the extremely wonderful conduct of the kings of both the lineages. O supreme sage! Yadu was accomplished and devoted to dharma. Please tell us about Vishnu's valour and descent in that lineage, along with his portion. [1371] The illustrious creator of all beings descended in Yadu's lineage. What did the atman of the universe do? Tell us that in detail. Those deeds are chanted about by those who have withdrawn from desire. They are pleasant to the ears and to the mind and are like medication to those on earth. Other than a person who slaughters animals, [1372] which man will stay away from a recital of Uttamashloka's qualities? Using him like a raft, my grandfathers crossed over the Kourava army, which was like an ocean that is impossible to cross, treating it like a puddle. [1373] It had timingilas in the

form of Devavrata and other atirathas and even the immortals would have found it difficult to defeat. I am the only son and seed left of the Kurus and the Pandavas. The weapon of Drona's son attacked and scorched my limbs. My mother sought refuge with him. He entered her womb and seizing his chakra, protected me. His valour is inside and outside all those who possess bodies. He is Purusha in the form of time. He is the one who confers death and immortality. Using his maya, he assumed human form. O learned one! Speak about him. You said that Samkarshana Rama was Rohini's son. Without changing bodies, how could he have been associated with Devaki's womb? Why did the illustrious Mukunda leave his father's house to go to Vraja? Along with his relatives, where did the lord of the Satvatas dwell? What did Keshava do, while residing in Vraja, and in Madhu's city? Why did he kill Kamsa, his mother's brother? This is not sanctioned. After assuming the form of a man, for how many years did he live among the Vrishnis in Yadu's city? [1374] How many wives did the lord have? O one who knows everything! O sage! I am full of faith and you should tell me all this in detail and everything else that Krishna did. I have given up drinking even water and this extremely unbearable hunger does not make me suffer, since I am drinking up this immortal account of Hari as it emerges from your lotus mouth.'

Suta said, 'O descendant of the Bhrigu lineage! [1375] Vyasa's illustrious son heard the words spoken by Vishnurata [1376] and applauded them, worshipping him. The foremost among devotees started to describe Krishna's conduct, which destroys the sins of kali yuga.'

Shri-Shuka said, 'O supreme among royal sages! Since you have developed this undeviating fondness towards Vasudeva's account, your mind has been properly fixed. Questions about Vasudeva's account purify three kinds of men—those who ask, those who speak and those who hear, like the water that washes his feet. [1377] Hundreds and thousands of armies of insolent kings, who were actually daityas, overwhelmed the earth. Suffering from this great burden, she went and sought refuge with Brahma. She assumed the form of a cow that was distressed and lamenting piteously, tears flowing from her eyes. She approached the lord and told him about her miseries.

Brahma understood. With her, the gods and the one with the three eyes, [1378] he went to the shores of the ocean of milk. Having gone there, he controlled himself and worshipped Vrishakapi, the Purusha, the god of the gods, the protector of the universe, through *purusha sukta*. [1379] While meditating, Brahma heard a sound vibrate in the sky. He told the gods, "O immortals! Hear from me Purusha's instructions. Without any delay, quickly do what you have been asked. The supreme being already knew about the earth's anxiety. Use your portions to take birth in the lineage of the Yadus and remain on earth as long as the lord of the lords roams around on earth, using his powers as time to reduce her burden. The illustrious and supreme Purusha will himself appear in Vasudeva's house. To cause him pleasure, let the celestial women also take birth. To cause pleasure to Hari, the god Ananta, the self-ruling one with the thousand hoods, will be born as Vasudeva's portion as his elder brother. The illustrious Vishnumaya confounds the universe. Instructed by the lord and to accomplish his purpose, she will be born in her own portion." The lord who is the master of the Prajapatis instructed the large number of immortals in this way. Having assured the earth with comforting words, he returned to his own supreme abode.

'Earlier, Shurasena, the lord of the Yadus, had gone to reside in the city of Mathura. He enjoyed the kingdoms of Mathura and Shurasena. Mathura became the capital of all the kings among the Yadavas. Hari is always present there. On one occasion, Vasudeva, Shura's son, married Devaki and with his newly wedded wife, ascended his chariot and departed. Kamsa, Ugrasena's son, wished to do what would bring pleasure to his sister. Therefore, surrounded by hundreds of golden chariots, he seized the reins of the horses. Devaka was fond of his daughter. While she was leaving, as dowry, he gave his daughter four hundred elephants with golden harnesses, fifteen thousand horses, eighteen hundred chariots and two hundred ornamented and delicate maidservants. Conches, trumpets, drums and kettledrums were sounded simultaneously. O son! With these auspicious signs, the groom and the bride got ready to leave. Along the route, while Kamsa was holding the reins, an invisible voice spoke to him. "O foolish one! You are conveying her. But her eighth child will kill you." He was a deceitful and wicked per-

son, the worst of the Bhoja lineage. Thus addressed, he held a sword in his hand and seized his sister by the hair, inclined to kill her. He was about to commit a reprehensible, violent and shameful deed. The immensely fortunate Vasudeva addressed him in these pacifying words. Vasudeva said, "Your qualities are praised by the brave and you have brought fame to the Bhoja lineage. How can you kill your sister, that too, on the occasion of her marriage. She is a woman. O brave one! As soon as a person with a body is born, death comes along with it. It might be today, or it might be after one hundred years. But for everyone with life, death is certain. Whenever the body attains panchatva, the jivatman helplessly follows the course of karma. It gives up the former body and obtains another body instead. A person places one foot on the ground and advances with the other foot. In exactly that way, like a caterpillar moving from one leaf to another, the jivatman follows the course of karma. When a person's wishes pervade the consciousness, because he has seen an object or heard about it, his mind thinks about it and he sees it in his dreams, identifying with it. This body is like that. One obtains it and forgets everything else. Urged by destiny, one runs around here and there, right up to the time of death, the mind overcome by these passions. [1380] The jivatman's mind is immersed in the five senses and the gunas fashioned by maya. Surrendering to these, he is born along with these. When they are reflected in water in an earthen vessel, depending on the force of the wind, stellar bodies appear in different shapes. In that way, the jivatman follows an attachment to gunas his own maya has created and he is confounded. Therefore, if one is interested in one's own welfare, one should not act so as to cause injury in this way. A person who causes harm faces fear from others. [1381] This girl is your younger sister. She is like your daughter and should be pitied. You are loving towards the distressed and you should not kill a fortunate one like her." However, the terrible person did not comprehend these words of sama and bheda. [1382] O Kouravya! Since he was following the vow of demons, he would not be restrained.

'Realizing that he was determined, Anakadundubhi thought that the time had come to dissuade him through the use of other means. "As long as there is intelligence and strength, an intelligent person must try to avoid death.

Even after this, if it cannot be averted, the embodied being does not suffer from any crime. He is like death and by handing over my sons to him, I can save this pitiable woman. After all, that is only if sons are born to me and if this Death [1383] does not die before that. Perhaps the opposite may happen. [1384] The course of destiny is impossible to understand. The imminent must be averted, even though what is averted may occur again. There is no evident reason for fire avoiding one piece of wood and consuming another piece of wood. It can be nothing other than destiny. In exactly the same way, the reason for an embodied being's separation from a body and union with another body cannot be ascertained." He thus contemplated the situation as best as he could. Thereafter, Shouri [1385] honoured and showed a great deal of respect to the wicked one who was in front of him. With a pleasant face that was like a lotus, he spoke to the violent and shameless one. Though his mind grieved, he smiled and said, "O amiable one! The invisible voice may have said that, but you have nothing to fear from her. Since you are facing fear, I will hand over all her sons to you." Kamsa understood that his words were full of meaning and refrained from killing his sister. He praised Vasudeva, who was pleased, and entered his house. Devaki was full of all the gods. After some time, year after year, she gave birth to eight sons and a daughter. Anakadundubhi was extremely anxious that he should not break his promise. Therefore, with difficulty, he handed over the first born son, Kirtiman, to Kamsa. What can't a virtuous person withstand? What does a learned person hope for? There is nothing that inferior people will not do. However, for a person who upholds the atman, what will be difficult to give up? O king! On beholding Shouri's equanimity and adherence to the truth, Kamsa was satisfied in his mind. He smiled and spoke to him. "Let the boy be returned. There is no fear on his account. My death has been destined from the eighth son that the two of you have." Agreeing, Anakadundubhi accepted the son and left. However, he wasn't happy at the words spoken by the wicked person who had not conquered his atman. Nanda and the other cowherds in Vraja, their women, Vasudeva and the others among the Vrishnis, Devaki and the other women among the Yadus and the rela-

tives, kin and well-wishers of both of them, [1386] even if they followed Kamsa, were all generally divinities.

'Once, Narada had come to Kamsa and had told him that the illustrious one would make efforts to slay the daityas who were increasing the heavy burden of the earth. When the rishi departed, Kamsa formed the view that the Yadus were gods and that Vishnu would be born from Devaki's womb, so as to slay him. Therefore, he bound Devaki and Vasudeva in iron shackles and imprisoned them in their own house. As soon as each son was born, suspecting him to be Aja, [1387] he had him killed. In general, kings on earth who are greedy and envious of the lives of others, kill mothers, fathers, brothers and all well-wishers. Earlier, he [1388] had been a giant asura named Kalanemi and had been slain by Vishnu. Having been born again and having got to know this, [1389] he became an enemy of the Yadus. The immensely strong one even imprisoned his own father, Ugrasena, the lord of the Yadus, Bhojas and Andhakas, and enjoyed the land of Shurasena.'

Chapter 10(2)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Using the support of Pralamba, Baka, Chanura, Trinavarta, Mahashana, [1390] Mushtika, Arishta, Dvivida, Putana, Keshi, Dhenuka and other asuras and assisted by kings like Bana, Bhouma and Magadha, the powerful one caused carnage among the Yadus. [1391] Oppressed by him, they went to regions like Kuru, Panchala, Kekaya, Shalva, Vidarbha, Nishadha, Videha and Kosala. However, some relatives served him and followed his instructions. Ugrasena's son killed six of Devaki's sons. After this, a portion of Vishnu, known as Ananta, entered Devaki's womb and enhanced her joy and misery. [1392] The illustrious atman of the universe knew about the fear caused by Kamsa to the Yadus, who had accepted him as their protector. He instructed Yogamaya, "O goddess! O fortunate on! Go to Vraja, ornamented by cowherds and cattle. Rohini, Vasudeva's wife, is with Nanda in Gokula. [1393] Anxious about Kamsa, the others [1394] are residing in secret places. My portion, known as Shesha, is the foetus in Devaki's

womb. Take him from there and place him in Rohini's womb. O auspicious one! In my portion, I will then be born from Devaki's womb. You will be born from Yashoda, Nanda's wife. Men will worship you as the supreme goddess who confers all the objects of desire. Since you are one who grants boons of all the objects of desire, they will offer you incense, gifts and sacrifices. Men will create places for you on earth and give you different names —Durga, Bhadrakali, Vijaya, Vaishnavi, Kumuda, Chandika, Krishna, [1395] Madhavi, Kanyaka, Maya, Narayani, Ishani, Sharada and Ambika. Because he was taken away from the womb, on earth, he will be known as Samkarshana. [1396] He will be Rama because he delights the world and because of his superior strength, he will be Balabhadra." Thus instructed by the illustrious one, she agreed to these words. Having circumambulated him, she went to earth and acted accordingly. Yoganidra [1397] conveyed him from Devaki's womb to that of Rohini. The citizens shrieked, "Alas! The foetus has miscarried." The illustrious one, the atman of the universe, is the one who grants his devotees freedom from fear.

'With all his powers, he used his portion to enter Anakadundubhi's mind. With the Purusha's portion inside him, he was as radiant as the sun. He became such that all creatures found it impossible to approach him, or assail him. Achyuta represents what is auspicious for the universe. He is the one who creates himself and is in all atmans. Shura's son [1398] controlled himself and conveyed his portion to the divine lady [1399] through his mind, bringing delight to the directions. The one who resides in the entire universe resided inside Devaki, but she did not become excessively radiant. She was confined in the house of the Indra among the Bhojas and was like the flame of a fire that has been covered. The virtuous one was like Sarasvati, in a person whose learning is deceitful. However, with the unvanquished one inside her, she was still radiant. The one with the sweet smiles illuminated the entire house. On seeing her, Kamsa thought, "Hari, the one who will take away my life, must be inside. This prosperity must be because of that. She wasn't like this earlier. What must I quickly do now? Fixed in his objective, he will not give up his valour. She is a woman. She is my sister. She is pregnant. If I kill her, for the rest of my remaining life, that will destroy my fame and

prosperity. If a person is extremely cruel, even if he remains alive, he is as good as dead and men curse him. When his body is dead, it is certain that he descends into the darkness meant for those who identify with the body." Therefore, the lord himself desisted from that terrible darkness. Instead, firm in his enmity towards Hari, he waited for the time of birth. Whether he was seated, lying down, standing, eating or roaming around the earth, he thought of Hrishikesha and saw that the universe was full of nothing other than him.

'Brahma, Bhava, the sages, Narada and others, along with the gods and their companions, arrived at the spot and pleased and praised the lord who confers everything with their chants. The gods said, "Your vow is truth. You are the supreme truth. You are three kinds of truth. [1400] You are the source of truth. You are immersed in truth. You are the truth behind all kinds of truth. Your eyes are truth and the personified form of truth. [1401] Truth is in your atman and we have sought refuge with you. The original tree has one base, two fruits, three roots, four saps, five attributes, six states, seven sheaths, eight branches, nine holes, ten coverings and two birds. [1402] You alone are the source of everything that exists. You are the reservoir and you are the one who shows favours. [1403] It is your maya that envelopes all intelligence and people look upon you in many different ways. However, the learned do not think that. You are knowledge and you are the atman. For the welfare of mobile and immobile objects in the world, you assume different forms. You originate from sattva and repeatedly bring happiness to the virtuous and what is inauspicious to those who are wicked. O lotus-eyed one! You are the reservoir of all that is sattva and if one's intelligence meditates on your lotus feet alone, through that great effort, one can cross over this ocean of life, as if it is but a puddle. [1404] O radiant one! Having themselves crossed over that terrible and impassable ocean of life, they are full of affection towards those who have crossed and have left behind the boat in the form of your lotus feet. This is because of your favours towards the virtuous. O lotus-eyed one! There are others who pride themselves on being free. Their intelligence has not been purified and their sentiments are not devoted towards you. With great difficulty, they may attain a supreme state. However,

since they do not respect your feet, they fall down from there. O Madhava! This does not happen to those who are devoted to you. Those who are bound in affection towards you do not deviate from the path. Protected by you, they roam around fearlessly. O lord! They stride on the heads of the leaders of enemies. You are stationed in pure sattva. For the benefit and welfare of embodied beings, you assume auspicious forms. People worship you through the rites of the Vedas, yoga, austerities, meditation and offerings. O creator! Had you not assumed this form of sattva, there would have been no jnana and vijnana and the cleansing of ignorance. Your form can only be imagined through the illumination of the gunas and each guna brings a specific kind of illumination. [1405] Your names, forms, attributes, births and deeds cannot be ascertained. You are the witness. Your course can only be imagined through the mind and through words. O god! However, those who are devoted in rites meant for you, can understand. If a person hears about, chants, remembers and thinks about your names, forms and auspicious signs and, with single-minded intelligence, performs rites meant for your lotus feet, he does not deserve to be born again. O Hari! O lord! It is good fortune that with your birth and stride, the burden of the earth will be removed. Your feet bear extremely auspicious marks. It is good fortune that because of your favours, we will see them on earth and the firmament again. O lord without birth! You are the reason behind your birth. However, we should not debate about your pastimes. O abode without fear! Birth, preservation and death are brought on individual souls because of their own ignorance. You have assumed avataras like a fish, [1406] a horse, a tortoise, Nrisimha, a boar, a swan, a king, [1407] a brahmana [1408] and a god. [1409] O lord! Protect us and the three worlds now. O supreme among the Yadus! Take away the earth's burden. We worship you. O mother! [1410] For our welfare, it is good fortune that the supreme and illustrious being has resorted to your womb in his portion. There will no longer be any fear from the lord of Bhoja, who is about to die. Your son will be the protector of the Yadus." They praised Purusha, with an indecipherable form, in this way. Placing Brahma and Ishana at the forefront, the gods then returned to heaven.'

Chapter 10(3)

Shri-Shuka said, 'It was an extremely auspicious time, with all the qualities. The nakshatra in the ascendant was that associated with Brahma. [1411] All the nakshatras, planets and stars were serene. The directions and the sky were peaceful. Excellent and sparkling stars arose. The earth, with its many collections of cities, villages, pastures and mines were auspicious. The rivers were full of sparkling water. The lakes were beautiful with blooming lotuses. The trees were full of bunches of flowers that resounded with the sound of birds and humming bees. The breeze that blew was pleasant to the touch and bore along auspicious, pure and fragrant scents. Fires blazed in the houses of dvijas, but were serene. At the time of Aja's birth, the minds of virtuous people, injured by asuras, rejoiced. Ketttledrums were sounded in the sky. The kinnaras and gandharvas sang. The Siddhas and charanas uttered words of praise. Along with apsaras, delighted vidyadhara ladies danced. Rejoicing, gods and sages showered down flowers. Clouds thundered softly, echoing the sounds of the ocean. When Janardana was born, it was midnight and full of darkness. Devaki was like a goddess and Vishnu, who is in the core of everyone's heart, appeared, like the full moon rising in the eastern direction. The infant was lotus-eyed, with four arms holding a conch shell, a club and other weapons. [1412] There was the shrivatsa mark and the beautiful Koustubha hung from the neck. He was attired in yellow garments and was as beautiful as a monsoon cloud. His locks of hair possessed thousands of strands and were illuminated by the extremely expensive diadem and earrings, studded with lapis lazuli. With his girdle, armlets, bracelets and other ornaments, he was radiant and Vasudeva looked at him. When he looked at Hari, his eyes dilated in wonder. Anakadundubhi kept looking at his son. Though it was a time for festivities because Krishna had appeared as an avatara, he was filled with respect. Delighted and overwhelmed, he gave brahmanas ten thousand cows. [1413] He understood that the child was Purusha and prayed. He focused his intelligence and bowed his limbs down before the supreme one, joining his hands in salutation. He

lost his fear. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The delivery chamber was illuminated with the infant's own radiance and splendour.

'Vasudeva said, "O one who witnesses all kinds of intelligence! I know that you are yourself Purusha, beyond Prakriti. Your form is full of bliss and I have only felt you. At the beginning of creation, you created Prakriti, consisting of the three gunas. Thereafter, though you did not actually enter it, it appears as if you entered it. They were all without modifications. [1414] But they were created with modifications and manifested themselves as separate, with diverse powers. Because of association, after creation, they appear to have entered into it. [1415] But they existed earlier too. Therefore, their birth is not possible. [1416] In that way, your signs can only be inferred through intelligence. Though you do not accept the gunas, you can be grasped through the gunas. You are everywhere, inside and outside. You are omnipresent. You are in all atmans and every object is in your atman. If a man thinks that the atman can be seen through the gunas, he acts as if the body has an independent and real existence and is ignorant. He has not debated the issues properly. O lord! It is said that creation, preservation and destruction flow from you. You have no desires and no gunas and have no transformations. You are the lord and the brahman. There is no contradiction in this, because activities are carried out by the gunas, which find a refuge in you. You maintain the three worlds with your maya. Indeed, you assume different complexions for your course of action. You are white. [1417] For the sake of creation, you are suffused with the red of rajas. At the end of creation, you assume the dark complexion of tamas. You are the lord of the worlds. O lord of everything! To protect, you have descended in my house. There are crores of leaders of asuras, in the guise of kings. You will slaughter the arrays in those armies. O lord of the gods! Hearing that you will be born in our house, that fellow has killed your elder brothers. He will be informed about your descent by his messengers. Hearing this, he will now rush here, with upraised weapons."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'Devaki was extremely surprised to see that her son possessed all the marks of the great being. Scared of Kamsa, she prayed. Devaki said, "You are spoken of as the original and unmanifest be-

ing, though, here and there, you assume forms. You are the resplendent brahman. You are without gunas and you are without modifications. You are only consciousness, without any desires. You are omnipresent. You are Vishnu himself, the lamp for achieving adhyatma. At the end of two parardhas, the worlds are destroyed. The great elements enter their primordial form. Through the force of time, the manifest enters into the unmanifest. O one who is known as Ashesha! [1418] You alone are the one who is left. O one who is related to the unmanifest! [1419] This time, beginning with *nimesha* [1420] and ending with a year, is said to be the result of your pastimes and glory. Your efforts created this universe. O lord! You are the reservoir of good fortune. I seek refuge with you. A mortal person is scared of the serpent in the form of death. He runs away to all the worlds, but does not find freedom from fear. However, by chance, I have obtained your lotus feet today. Those who obtain it lie down in peace and death runs away from them. Ugrasena's son is terrible and we are terrified of him. Save us from him. You are the one who destroys the fear of your servants. This form of yours, as Purusha, is worshipped through meditation. Let it not be seen by those like me, tainted by material association. O Madhusudana! I am becoming more and more anxious about the wicked Kamsa. Let him not know that you have been born through me. O one who is the atman of the universe! Withdraw this transcendental form of yours, with the four-armed splendour of the conch shell, chakra, mace and lotus. You are the supreme Purusha and at the end of the night, [1421] the entire universe finds refuge in your body. That form manifested itself in my womb. This is a great wonder in the world of men."

'The illustrious one said, "O virtuous one! In an earlier birth, during Svayambhuva manvantara, you were Prishni and this one [1422] was an unblemished Prajapati, by the name of Sutapa. You were instructed by Brahma to generate subjects. Controlling the aggregate of the senses, the two of you tormented yourselves through supreme austerities. You tolerated the attributes of time—rain, wind, sun, cold and summer. You controlled your breath of life and cleansed all the impurities in the mind. You subsisted on decayed leaves and air and pacified your minds. You worshipped me, with the objective of obtaining a cherished object from me. In this way, you tormented

yourselves through extremely fierce austerities that are difficult to perform. Your minds were on me and twelve thousand divine years passed. O unblemished one! I was satisfied at this, the austerities, devotion, constant faith and sentiments of the heart. I am supreme among those who grant boons. I manifested myself before you. Wishing to grant you your cherished object, I offered you a boon and was told, 'Let a son like you be born to me.' As a couple, you were without offspring and had also not been satiated with sexual desires. Therefore, confounded by my divine maya, you did not ask for emancipation. You obtained the boon that you would get a son like me. After I had left, you engaged in sexual intercourse and I decided to satisfy your wishes. I did not see anyone in this world who was my equal in good conduct, generosity or qualities. Therefore, I was born as your son and came to be known as Prishnigarbha. [1423] When the two of you became Aditi and Kashyapa, I was again born from you as Upendra and because I was a dwarf, came to be known as Vamana. This is the third time that I have been born from your bodies. O virtuous lady! Having been born, I have kept my pledge. I have shown you my form to remind you about my earlier births. Had I been born with the marks of a mortal being, you would not have known that I had been born. Both of you look upon me as a son. However, also revere me as the brahman. If you affectionately think about me, you will obtain the supreme state with me."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'Having said this, Hari was silent. The illustrious one used his maya. As his parents looked on, he instantly turned into an ordinary child. As instructed by the illustrious one, Shouri picked up his son, desiring to leave the delivery chamber. Yogamaya was born through Nanda's wife. All the citizens were deep in sleep and she robbed the doorkeepers of their consciousness and their senses. All the gates were firm and impossible to open, the large doors secured with iron bolts and chains. As Vasudeva advanced, holding Krishna, these opened on their own, like darkness dispelled by the sun. The clouds rumbled gently and gently showered down. Shesha followed, fending off the rain with his hoods. [1424] Since Maghavan was incessantly showering down, Yama's younger sister [1425] was full of deep floods of water, with foam and waves agitated by the force. The river

was full of terrible whirlpools. But like the ocean, it provided a passage to Shri's lord. [1426] Shouri reached Nanda's Vraja and understood that all the cowherds were deep in sleep. He placed his son on Yashoda's bed, picked up her daughter, and returned to his own house. Vasudeva placed the infant daughter down on Devaki's bed. He bound himself with the iron shackles around his legs, just as he had been bound down earlier. Yashoda, Nanda's wife, knew that she had delivered. However, she was exhausted and sleep had taken away her memory. Therefore, she was completely ignorant about the baby's gender.'

Chapter 10(4)

Shri-Shuka said, 'All the outer doors of the inner quarters were closed, as they had been earlier. Hearing the sounds of an infant crying, the doorkeepers woke up. The king of the Bhojas had been waiting anxiously and they swiftly went to him and told him about Devaki having given birth. Overwhelmed, he immediately got up from his bed, exclaiming, "This is the destiny." With his hair dishevelled, he quickly tottered towards the delivery chamber. The virtuous lady and queen spoke to her brother, miserably and piteously. "O fortunate one! She will be your daughter-in-law. You should not kill a girl. O brother! My children were like fires and you have killed many of them because you were goaded by destiny. Give me this single daughter. O lord! Moreover, I am your younger sister. I am distressed and have lost my sons. O dear one! I am unfortunate. You should grant me this last child." Miserable and grieving, she lamented and clung to her daughter, begging him. However, the wicked one rebuked her and snatched her away from her hands. This was the newly born daughter of his own sister. However, all his affection was uprooted by his selfish interests. He seized her by the feet and dashed her against a stone slab. However, the goddess instantly freed herself from his hand and rose up into the sky. Vishnu's younger sister [1427] could be seen, with eight mighty arms that held weapons. She was adorned with divine garlands, garlands, pastes, jewels and ornaments. She

wielded a bow, a spear, an arrow, a shield, a sword, a conch shell, a chakra and a club. Siddhas, charanas, gandharvas, apsaras, kinnaras and serpents brought her offerings and praised her. She said, "O foolish one! What will you accomplish by killing me? The one who will bring about your end has already been born somewhere. He was your enemy in an earlier birth. Why unnecessarily kill miserable ones?" The illustrious goddess, Yogamaya, said this. She is worshipped by many names on earth and her shrines have many different names. [1428]

'Hearing what she had said, Kamsa was extremely surprised. He freed Devaki and Vasudeva and humbly said, "O sister! O brother-in-law! Alas! I have indeed been wicked. Like a flesh-eater who preys on his own offspring, I have killed many of your sons. Devoid of compassion, I have been wicked and have abandoned my relatives and well-wishers. What world will I go to? I am like the slayer of a brahmana. Though I breathe, I am as good as dead. It is not only mortals, gods also utter lies. I trusted them. [1429] I have been wicked and have killed the children of my own sister. O immensely fortunate ones! Do not grieve. They have enjoyed the fruits of their own deeds. All creatures are subject to destiny and do not always live together. On earth, objects are created out of earth and merge into it after they are destroyed. However, the earth does not suffer from any destruction and the atman is like that. If a person does not know this difference, he causes difficulties for himself. The cycle of life does not cease because of association with, or separation from, a body. O fortunate one! [1430] Your sons were unfortunately killed by me. However, do not sorrow because of this. Helplessly, they have all enjoyed the fruits of their own deeds. As long as a person does not realize himself, he thinks, 'I am the killer. I have been killed.' As long as he is ignorant and suffers from this vanity, he continues to suffer as a subject or an object. Both of you are virtuous and are compassionate towards the distressed. Please pardon my wicked deeds." Having said this, with tears flowing down his face, he clasped the feet of his brother-in-law and his own sister. Trusting the words spoken by the infant girl and considering his own affection, he freed Devaki and Vasudeva from their fetters. Since her brother was repentant, Devaki's rage was pacified. Released, Va-

sudeva smiled and spoke to him. “O immensely fortunate one! What happens to embodied beings is exactly as you have described it. Because of the power of ignorance, the intelligence possesses ahamkara and this leads to differences of ‘mine’ and ‘someone else’s’. They are filled with sorrow, delight, fear, hatred, avarice, confusion and insolence and do not see what is true. Instead, they have a futile and false sense of differentiation and kill each other.” They were pleased and addressed Kamsa in this pure way. Seeking leave of Devaki and Vasudeva, he entered his residence.

‘After the night was over, Kamsa summoned his ministers. He told them everything that had been said by Yogamaya. [1431] They heard what their master said. The daityas, the enemies of the gods, were not accomplished. They were filled with intolerance towards the gods and said, “O Indra among the Bhojas! If this is the case, we will now identify and kill all the children who are ten days old or less, in cities, villages and cowherd settlements. The gods are scared in battles. What will they do with their efforts? When your bowstring twanged, their minds always became anxious. In every direction, struck by the storms of your arrows, they were slaughtered. Desiring to save their lives, the others fled. Some gods were distressed. They cast aside their weapons and joined their hands in salutation. With their hair dishevelled and garments loosened, others pleaded, ‘We are terrified.’ You do not kill those who no longer remember how to use their shastras and astras, those without chariots, those who are confused by fear, those who are retreating, those who have broken their bows and those who do not want to fight. The gods are brave and boast only when there is peace and there is no fighting. Hari hides in solitude and Shambhu resides in the forest. Brahma is engaged in austerities and Indra is limited in valour. What will they do? However, because they are enemies, we do not think that the gods should be ignored. Engage us, those who follow you, to dig up and destroy their foundations. If a disease in a limb is ignored and takes deep roots, a man finds it impossible to treat it. Like the aggregate of the senses, if a great enemy is neglected, his strength increases and it is impossible to control him. The foundation of the gods is Vishnu. Eternal dharma exists wherever he is present. The Vedas, cattle, brahmanas, austerities and sacrifices with dakshinas also exist

there. O king! Therefore, using all our efforts, we will kill brahmanas who know about the brahman, ascetics, those who are devoted to sacrifices and cattle, because these provide the milk for oblations. Brahmanas, cattle, the Vedas, austerities, truth, control of the senses, control of the mind, faith, compassion, fortitude and kratus form Hari's body. He is the controller of all the gods. That enemy of the asuras is in the cores of all hearts. He is the foundation for all the gods, Ishvara and the four-faced one. [1432] The means of killing him is by causing injury to the rishis." Thus, the evil-minded Kamsa consulted with his wicked ministers. The asura was bound down by the noose of destiny and thought that injuring brahmanas was good for him. The danavas, who could assume any form at will, loved carnage and he commanded them to cause carnage among the virtuous in every direction. He then entered his house. Their nature was full of rajas and tamas and their intelligence was stupid. Since their deaths had already arrived, they engaged in hatred towards the virtuous. This destroys everything among men —lifespan, prosperity, fame, dharma, worlds, benedictions and all that is beneficial.'

Chapter 10(5)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Delighted that a son had been born, the great-minded Nanda bathed, purified and ornamented himself. He invited brahmanas who knew about the Vedas. He got them to pronounce benedictions and perform the birth rites. Following the rites, he got the worship of the gods and the ancestors done. He gave two hundred thousand ornamented cows, seven heaps of sesamum that were like mountains, floods of gems and garments overlaid with gold to brahmanas. Some objects are purified through the passage of time, some through ablutions, some through sacraments, some through austerities and some through worship. Some are purified through donations, some through contentment, some through material objects and some through knowledge of the atman. Brahmanas, sutas, *magadha*s and *bandi*s uttered auspicious words. [1433] Singers sang. Drums and kettledrums

were repeatedly sounded. Vraja, the doors, the courtyards and the insides of the houses were cleaned and sprinkled. [1434] There were decorations of colourful flags, penants, garlands, cloth and tender leaves on the gates. Cows, bulls and calves were rubbed with a mixture made out of turmeric powder and oil. They were decorated with mineral dyes and adorned with peacock feathers, garlands, pieces of cloth and golden chains. O king! The *gopa*s arrived there, wearing expensive garments and ornaments and adorned in jackets [1435] and headdresses. They held many kinds of presents in their hands. On hearing that Yashoda had given birth to a son, the gopis rejoiced. They decorated themselves with garments, ornaments, collyrium and other things. Their lotus faces, with freshly applied kunkuma, resembled the filaments of lotuses. With broad hips and heavy breasts, they quickly went with presents. Polished earrings made of gems and necklaces made out of gold coins made the gopis dazzle. They wore colourful garments. Along the path, flowers showered down from the braids of their hair. With the presents, they went to Nanda's abode. They were beautiful and their earrings, breasts and necklaces moved as they walked. They pronounced benedictions. "May the child be protected for a long time." They worshipped Aja, sprinkling turmeric powder mixed with oil. In the great festivities, many kinds of wonderful musical instruments were sounded. Krishna Ananta, the lord of the universe, had arrived in Nanda's Vraja. Delighted, the gopas sprinkled each other with curds, milk, ghee and water and smeared and hurled butter at each other. The great-minded Nanda gave them garments, ornaments and wealth in the form of cattle. He also gave these to sutas, magadhas and bandis and others who earned a living through their learning. Generous, he honoured them as each one deserved and gave them what they wished for. This was to worship Vishnu and to celebrate the birth of his own son. The immensely fortunate Rohini was honoured by Nandagopa. She wandered around, [1436] adorned in divine garments, garlands, necklaces and ornaments. This was the start for Nanda's Vraja to become prosperous in every way. O king! Because of the quality of Hari residing there, Rama started to sport there.

‘O extender of the Kuru lineage! Nanda engaged the gopas in the protection of Gokula. He then went to Kamsa to pay the annual taxes. Vasudeva heard that his brother, Nanda, had arrived to pay taxes to the king. When that was over, he [1437] went to the place where he was staying. On seeing him, he [1438] suddenly arose, as if life had come back to the body. Delighted and overwhelmed with love, he embraced and engulfed his beloved in his arms. O lord of the earth! When he was honoured, respected and happily seated, he [1439] asked about the welfare of both his sons. [1440] His mind was devoted to them. “O brother! You did not have offspring and are aged. It is good fortune that a son has now been born to you. You had given up hope of getting offspring and an offspring has suddenly arrived. It is good fortune that I have met you now. It is extremely rare to meet a person one loves. It is as if I have again been born in this wheel of samsara. Wonderful is the course of karma. Loved ones and well-wishers do not reside together. They are like logs of wood that come together in a flood and are then borne apart by the current. You now reside in a great forest, surrounded by your well-wishers. Are the animals without disease? Is there plenty of water, grass and plants for them? O brother! My son [1441] lives with the two of you in Vraja and is nurtured by you. Are he and his mother [1442] well? It is said that when a man’s well-wishers are well, he enjoys the three objectives of existence. [1443] It is thought that when they suffer, those three objectives are also not attained.” Nanda replied, “Alas! Kamsa has slain many of Devaki’s sons. The youngest daughter was left alive. But she has also gone to heaven. It is indeed the case that the unseen destiny is supreme for men. If a person does not know this truth about destiny, he is confounded.” Vasudeva said, “You have paid the king the annual taxes and we have seen each other. It is not desirable that you should remain here for many days. There may be disturbances in Gokula.” Thus addressed by Shouri, Nanda and the other gopas prepared to leave. Having taken his permission, they yoked their carts and left for Gokula.’

Chapter 10(6)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Along the path, Nanda wondered whether Shouri's words could be false. [1444] Fearing these disturbances, he sought refuge with Hari. Kamsa had engaged Putana, the terrible slayer of infants. She roamed around, slaying infants in cities, villages and cowherd settlements. When engaged in their own tasks, people do not listen to words about the protector of Satvatas, words that slay rakshasas, female yatudhanas proliferate there. Flying through the sky, Putana, who could travel anywhere at will, arrived in Nanda's Gokula. She used her maya to enter in the form of a woman. Her hair was braided in garlands of mallika flowers. Her waist was slender and her buttocks and breasts were heavy. She was adorned in excellent garments and earrings. Her face was radiant with locks of shining hair. Her smile was sweet and she cast sidelong glances. The beautiful lady stole the hearts of the residents of Vraja. She was beautiful, holding a lotus in her hand and the gopis thought that Shri had arrived to meet her husband.

'She wandered around as she pleased, searching for children she could kill, and approached Nanda's house. She saw the infant lying down on a bed, his own infinite energy hidden, like a fire covered in ashes. He recognized her as a demoness that kills children. However, the atman of mobile and immobile objects remained with his eyes closed. She placed Ananta, her death, on her lap, just as a stupid person takes up a serpent, his intelligence mistaking it for a rope. Her heart was fierce, like a sword sheathed inside a scabbard. The two mothers [1445] saw that beautiful lady inside the room, seemingly extremely affectionate. Her radiance stupefied them and they stood there, watching. The terrible one placed him on her lap and placed her breast, filled with indigestible and virulent poison, inside his mouth. The illustrious one was filled with rage. He seized her breast firmly with his hands and as he drank, sucked out her breath of life too. She screamed, "Let go. Enough, let go." However, she was crushed in the core of her inner organs. Her eyes dilated and her feet and hands thrashed around repeatedly. With her body perspiring, she wailed. At the sound of her extremely deep and powerful roars, the mountains, the earth, the firmament and the planets trembled. The nether regions and the directions were agitat-

ed. People fell down on the ground, scared that lightning would strike. Because of the pressure on her breast, the roamer in the night lost her life. In that pasture, she expanded herself and reassumed her own form. Her mouth gaped and she stretched out her hair, legs and arms. O king! She fell down, like Vritra struck by the vajra. O Indra among kings! When she fell down, trees within a range of three gavyutis [1446] were crushed. It was an extremely great wonder. Her mouth was full of sharp teeth, each as long as the front of a plough. Her nostrils were like caves in mountains. Her breasts were like the slopes on mountains. Her fierce and red hair was dishevelled. Her eyes were as deep as fathomless wells. Her terrible loins were like the sandy banks of a river. Her arms, thighs and feet were like strong dams. Her stomach was like a lake that had no water in it. On seeing her body, the gopas and gopis were terrified. Their hearts, ears and heads had already been shattered by the roars. They saw that the child was fearlessly playing on her breast. Filled with confusion, the gopis quickly approached and picked him up. With Yashoda and Rohini, they arranged for his protection by properly waving a cow's tail around him in every direction and performing other rites. They bathed him in cow's urine and again smeared him with dust raised by the hoof of a cow. They applied cowdung to twelve parts of his body and pronounced the names. [1447]

'The gopis touched water and performed nyasa separately on their bodies and their hands. [1448] They performed *bija-nyasa* over the child. [1449] "May Aja protect your feet. May Maniman protect your knees. May Yajna protect your thighs. May Achyuta protect your loins. May Hayasya [1450] protect your stomach. May Keshava protect your heart. May Isha protect your chest. May Ina protect your throat. May Vishnu protect your arms. May Urukrama protect your mouth. May Ishvara protect your head. May the wielder of the chakra protect you from the front. Wielding the club, may Hari protect you from the back. With the bow, may the slayer of Madhu, and with the arrow, may Ajana protect you on both sides. May Urugaya, the bearer of the conch shell, protect you in the corners. May Upendra protect you from the top. May Tarkshya protect you on the ground. May the being who is the wielder of the plough protect you on all sides. May Hrishikesha protect your senses.

May Narayana protect your breath of life. May the lord of Shveta-dvipa protect your heart. May the lord of yoga protect your mind. May Prishnigarbha protect your intelligence. May the illustrious and supreme being protect your atman. May Govinda protect you in your pastimes. May Madhava protect you while you are sleeping. May Vaikuntha protect you while you are walking. May the lord of Shri protect you while you are seated. May the enjoyer of sacrifices, the terror of all demons, protect you while you eat. May all those who are terrified at the mention of Vishnu's name be destroyed—*dakini*s, *yatudhani*s, kushmandas, *arbhakagraha*s, bhutas, pretas, pishachas, yakshas, rakshasas, vinayakas, *kotara*s, *revati*s, *jyeshtha*s, *putana*s, matrikas and others, *unmada*s, *apasmara*s, those who harm the body, the breath of life and the senses, those who are seen in dreams, evil portents and those who seize the aged and the young." [1451] The gopis performed this act of protection. Full of affection, the mother [1452] made her son lie down and offered him her breast.

'Nanda and the other gopas returned to Vraja from Mathura. On seeing Putana's body, they were filled with great wonder. "Our friend, Anakadundubhi, must indeed have been a rishi or a lord of yoga who has been reborn. How else could he have foreseen this disturbance?" The residents of Vraja used their axes to slice up the body. They flung the pieces far away and covering them with wood, burnt them. As the body was burnt, the smoke that arose was fragrant with the scent of aloe. Because she had suckled Krishna, all her sins were instantly cleansed. Putana was a slayer of infants. She was a *rakshasi* who fed on blood. She wished to kill Hari. But having offered him her breast, the evil one obtained a virtuous end. What need be said about those who surrender with faith and devotion to Krishna, the paramatman? They are like loving mothers. He is instated in the hearts of his devotees. He is worshipped by those whom the worlds worship. The illustrious one embraced the yatudhani's body and drank at her breast. Therefore, she obtained heaven, a destination meant for his mother. What need be said about cows and mothers who have fed Krishna the milk of their breasts? Devaki's illustrious son is the one who grants everything, including kaivalya. He drank the milk of those who affectionately treated him like a

son. [1453] They constantly looked upon Krishna and treated him like their own sons. O king! Therefore, they do not deserve to return to samsara, the source of ignorance. The residents of Vraja [1454] inhaled the fragrance from the smoke of the pyre. They came to Vraja and exclaimed, "What is this? Where is it coming from?" The gopas were told about Putana's arrival and everything else. On hearing about her death, they were extremely surprised and pronounced benedictions over the child. O extender of the Kuru lineage! Nanda was of the view that his son had returned from the dead and clasped him. With great delight, he inhaled the fragrance of his head. If a mortal person devotedly hears about the wonderful act of the infant Krishna and about Putana's liberation, he is filled with affection towards Govinda.'

Chapter 10(7)

The king said, 'The illustrious Hari Ishvara performs wonderful acts as an avatara. O lord! They bring delight to our ears and pleasure to our minds. If a man hears about these, his excessive attachment and thirst vanish and in a short while, he is drawn towards purity and truth. Such a man becomes devoted to Hari and is friendly towards his attendants. If you think it fit, tell us about Hari's activities and also about Krishna's extraordinary conduct as a child. Having come to earth, he followed the proclivities of human species.'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'This was a time when the nakshatra of his birth [1455] was in the ascendant. There was singing and the playing of musical instruments. Brahmanas were reciting mantras. In the midst of the women, the virtuous lady [1456] was going to bathe her son, the occasion being festivities connected with his turning around on the bed. [1457] Nanda's wife performed the rites associated with bathing him. The brahmanas pronounced benedictions and were honoured properly. They were given food, garments, garlands and desirable cattle. Since he was about to sleep and his eyes were closed, she gently laid him down. The spirited lady was anxious about festivities connected with turning around on the bed and was honouring the assembled residents of Vraja. Thus, she was unable to hear that her son was

crying. Desiring her breasts, he cried and flung his legs around. The child's feet were delicate as shoots and he was lying down under a cart. [1458] Struck by his feet, the cart was overturned and the metal vessels filled with many kinds of liquids were scattered. The cart's wheels, axles and yokes were shattered and broken. Yashoda was at the forefront of the women of Vraja who had assembled for the festivities connected with turning around on the bed. On seeing this extraordinary sight, they were anxious and so were Nanda and the others. "How did the cart shatter on its own?" Their minds were unable to grasp it. The children told the gopas and gopis, "He was crying and kicked it with his foot. There is no doubt about this." The gopas did not believe what the children had said. They did not know about the child's infinite strength. Scared that demons may have caused this, Yashoda picked up her weeping son and made him drink at her breasts. Using hymns, brahmanas pronounced benedictions. The strong gopas replaced the objects, just as they had been before. Brahmanas kindled a fire and offered oblations of curds, unbroken grain, kusha grass and water. "Benedictions are never futile for those who are without envy, free of falsehood, devoid of violence, free of pride, truthful and good in conduct. Nandagopa controlled himself and picked up the child. To the sounds of the Rig Veda, Sama Veda and Yajur Veda, excellent brahmanas sprinkled water, purified with herbs, on him. Lighting a fire, the brahmanas pronounced benedictions and he [1459] gave them food that was excellent in qualities. He gave them cows with all the qualities, covering these with cloth, garlands and golden necklaces. He offered this for his son's prosperity and they accepted these. The brahmanas were accomplished in mantras and the benedictions pronounced by them, or anything else that they said, were never false.

'Once, the virtuous lady was seated, fondling her son, who was on her lap. Suddenly, the child became heavy and she was no longer able to bear him. He was as heavy as the summit of a mountain. The gopi suffered from that burden. Surprised, she placed him down on the ground. She sought refuge with the great being who pervades the universe and continued with her tasks. A daitya named Trinavarta was Kamsa's servant and had been engaged by him. Assuming the form of a whirlwind, he stole the seated child.

All of Gokula was enveloped in dust and the ability to see suffered. The directions and sub-directions reverberated with a great and terrible sound. In a muhurta, the settlement was enveloped in a darkness of dust. Yashoda could not see her son at the place where she had kept him. Because of the extraordinary bits of dust mixed with gravel created by Trinavarta, everyone was confused and could not see himself, or anyone else. There was a strong whirlwind and showers of dust. Consequently, the helpless mother could not find any trace of her son. She was extremely miserable and thought about him, grieving severely. She fell down on the ground, like a cow when its calf had died. When the force of the storm and the shower of dust retreated, the gopis heard her weeping there. On not being able to see Nanda's son, they too started to weep. Their faces were flooded with tears and their minds were extremely tormented. Trinavarta had assumed the form of the storm and had stolen Krishna, taking him up into the sky. However, because he [1460] became greatly heavy to bear he was incapable of proceeding further and was pacified. He thought that he was like a boulder and heavier than his own self. However, the child, extraordinary in deeds, seized him by the throat and he was unable to go. Seized by the throat, the daitya became immobile and his eyes popped out. Uttering an indistinct sound, losing his life, he fell down, along with the child. The assembled weeping women saw him fall down from the sky on to a stone, all his fierce limbs shattered, just like Pura [1461] when it was pierced by Rudra's bow. Krishna was dangling from his chest. Astounded, they gathered him and returned him to his mother. He was safe, though he had been taken to the sky by the flesh-eater. He had been freed from the jaws of death. With Nanda at the forefront, the gopas and the gopis were greatly delighted at having got him back. "This is a great wonder. [1462] Though the child was taken away by a rakshasa, he has returned. The violent and deceitful one has been killed because of his own sins. A virtuous one, impartial towards everyone, has been freed from fear. Austerities must have been performed for a long time and Adhokshaja must have been worshipped. Roads and other things must have been constructed. Sacrifices must have been performed. There must have been donations and fraternal attitude towards living beings. That is the reason the child, despite

approaching death, has returned. It is good fortune that he has returned to his own relatives, who were waiting lovingly." In the great forest, Nandagopa witnessed many extraordinary events. Repeatedly amazed, he again honoured Vasudeva's words.

'Once, the beautiful lady [1463] had placed the child on her lap and, flooded with affection, was feeding him the milk flowing from her breasts. O king! Her son had almost finished feeding and there was a beautiful smile on his face. When the mother fondled him, he yawned and she saw the following inside his mouth—the firmament, the space between heaven and earth, the array of stellar bodies, the directions, the sun, the moon, the fire god, the wind god, the oceans, the dvipas, the mountains, the daughters of the mountains, [1464] forests, creatures and mobile and immobile objects. O king! On suddenly seeing the universe in this way, she started to tremble. Her eyes were like those of a fawn. Extremely surprised, she closed them.'

Chapter 10(8)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O king! The extremely great ascetic, Garga, was the priest of the Yadus. Urged by Vasudeva, he went to Nanda's Vraja. On seeing him, he [1465] was extremely delighted. He stood up and joined his hands in salutation. His mind accepting him as Adhokshaja, and prostrating himself before him, he worshipped him. When the hospitality was over, the sage seated himself comfortably. Delighting him, he addressed him in these gentle words. "O brahmana! You are full in yourself. What can we do for you? O illustrious one! Men who are householders are distressed in their minds. When great people come to them, it must be for their benefit. It cannot be any other way. The knowledge of stellar bodies and their movements is beyond the purview of the senses and you have yourself composed it. You are a person who knows the past and the future. [1466] You are supreme among those who know about the brahman. Because of his birth, a brahmana is a preceptor for men. You should perform the samskara for these two boys." Garga replied, "I am always known on earth as the preceptor of

the Yadus. If I perform the samskara for your son, he will be regarded as Devaki's son. Kamsa is evil in his intelligence and Anakadundubhi is your friend. Devaki's eighth child cannot have been a daughter. Having heard about this from the words of his messengers and having thought about it, he will be suspicious and will kill Devaki's son. That should not happen." Nanda said, "In that case, in this pasture of cattle, please perform it in secret. Perform the samskaras for dvijas and pronounce all the words of benediction." The brahmana was thus requested to do what he himself wished. In a secret place, he privately performed the namakarana [1467]for the two children. Garga said, "This son of Rohini's will delight his well-wishers with his qualities. He will therefore be known as Rama. Because of his great strength, he will be known as Bala. [1468] Since he will bring together different branches of the Yadus, he will also be Samkarshana. [1469] According to the yuga, this one has adopted bodies with three different complexions—white, red and yellow. [1470] He is now dark. [1471] Earlier, this son of yours used to belong to Vasudeva. Therefore, those who know will refer to this prosperous one as Vasudeva. [1472] This son of yours has many kinds of names and forms. His qualities and deeds are also similar. I know about them, but other people do not. He will be the delight of Gokula and will bring welfare to the gopas. It is through him that you will easily pass over all the difficulties. O lord of Vraja! Earlier, the virtuous suffered from bandits. They were not protected by a king. However, he vanquished the flourishing bandits. Enemies and asuras cannot overcome those who have Vishnu on their side. Those immensely fortunate men bring him pleasure. O Nanda! Therefore, this son of yours is like Narayana in his qualities. Through his powers, he will bring prosperity to the gopas. Be attentive towards him." Having instructed him in this way, Garga returned to his own home. Nanda was delighted, thinking himself to be full of all the benedictions.

'In a short period of time, Rama and Keshava started to crawl around Vraja on their hands and knees, amusing themselves. Dragging their legs behind them, they moved like reptiles on Vraja's mud, the bells on their ankles creating a beautiful sound. Delighted in their minds, they followed oth-

er people, attracted to them. However, as if they were scared, they returned to their mothers. The two mothers lovingly fed the two sons at their breasts, embracing their bodies, rendered beautiful with mud, in their arms. They offered them breasts that flowed over with milk. They glanced at their smiling mouths, with tiny teeth starting to grow. They were enchanted and delighted. The women witnessed their childhood pastimes, as inside Vraja, [1473] they seized the tails of calves and were dragged here and there by them. The women watched. Forgetting the household duties, they burst out in laughter and joy. There was danger from the horns and teeth of animals, from swords, fire, water, birds and thorns. They [1474] found it impossible to restrain their restless sons when they played and moved around. The mothers could no longer tend to their household duties. They grieved and lost their mental equilibrium. O royal sage! Within a short period of time, Rama and Krishna started to move around in Gokula on their feet, without dragging their knees on the ground. Along with Rama, the illustrious Krishna started to play with children from Vraja who were of similar ages. The women of Vraja obtained great delight from this.

'The gopis looked at Krishna's beautiful boyish playfulness. In his mother's hearing, they got together and spoke to each other. "Sometimes, he releases the calves at inappropriate times. [1475] When one is angry at this, he smiles. He steals and eats the tasty curds and drinks the milk, thinking of different methods of stealing. He divides his food among the monkeys, so that they can eat. If they do not eat, he breaks the vessels. If he does not find something within the house, he becomes angry and leaves, giving the infants some reason to cry. When the object is beyond the reach of his hands, he thinks of means, using planks and mortars. [1476] He knows how to make holes in the hanging vessels and take out the contents. When the house is dark, he uses the large number of jewels he wears on his body as lamps. He does this at a time when the gopis are anxiously engaged in their household tasks. He thus engages in naughty activities, passing urine and stool in our clean houses. He is expert in devising new methods of stealing. Having done this, he pretends to be well behaved." The women looked at his beau-

tiful face, which was seemingly scared. Though they complained, she [1477] smiled and did not feel like chastising him.

'On one occasion, Rama and the other gopa boys were playing. They went and informed Krishna's mother that he had eaten mud. She was always anxious about his welfare and seized him by his hand. Filled with fear and dread, Yashoda looked inside his mouth and spoke to him. "Why can't you control yourself? Why did you secretly eat mud? Your friends, the boys, have told me this and so has your elder brother." He replied, "O mother! I have not eaten. All of them have lied and complained. If they have really spoken the truth, look inside my mouth." She said, "If that is the case, open your mouth wide." The illustrious Hari, unlimited in his powers, opened his mouth, playing like a human child. She saw the universe, mobile and immobile objects, the firmament, the directions, mountains, dvipas, oceans, the surface of the earth, the wind, the fire, the moon, the stars, the revolution of the stellar bodies, water, energy, the outer sky, the inner sky, the transformation of the senses, the mind, the objects of the senses and the three gunas there. Along with this, there were all the different living beings and their lifespans, nature, the stores of karma and the differences in their appearances. In her son's body, in his opened mouth, she saw herself and Vraja and was filled with fear. "Is this a dream or is this the maya of the god? Is this because my intelligence has been confounded? Or has this resulted because my son has some natural powers of yoga in him? Therefore, let me seek refuge with the one who cannot be comprehended through debating and who cannot be easily perceived through intelligence, thoughts, deeds and words. He is the foundation for everything that is manifest. He is beyond all perception. Let me prostrate myself at his feet. It is because of his maya that there are perverse thoughts like 'I', 'mine', 'this is my husband', 'this is my son', 'I am the virtuous and prosperous wife of the lord of Vraja' and 'the gopas, the gopis and the wealth of cattle belong to me'. He is my refuge." In this way, the lord made the gopi [1478] understand the truth. The lord's extensive Vaishnavi maya filled her with affection towards her son. The gopi instantly forgot everything. [1479] With her son on her lap, her heart was filled with increasing love for him, as had been the case earlier.

Hari's glory is chanted in the three, [1480] the Upanishads and in the texts of samkhya, yoga and the Satvatas. However, she looked upon him as an ordinary son.'

The king asked, 'O brahmana! What did Nanda do to warrant such great prosperity? What did the immensely fortunate Yashoda do? Hari drank milk from her breasts. The generous Krishna's childhood deeds are sung about by wise people and remove the sins of the worlds. However, his parents [1481] could not witness them.'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'Drona, the foremost among the Vasus, and his wife, Dhara, were following the orders of Brahma [1482] and requested him, "When we have been born, and the great god, the lord of the universe, Hari, is born on earth, may we possess supreme devotion towards him. That makes one cross over all kinds of hardship easily." The illustrious one agreed and the immensely famous Drona was born in Vraja and became known as Nanda. Dhara became Yashoda. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Among all the gopas and gopis, that couple had incessant devotion towards the illustrious one and Janardana became their son. To make Brahma's instructions come true, the lord Krishna, along with Rama, lived in Vraja and through his pastimes, brought them delight.'

Chapter 10(9)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Once, the servant-maids were engaged in some other household work and Yashoda, Nanda's wife, herself started to churn out curds. There were songs that were sung about the child's conduct. At the time of churning curds, she remembered these and sang them. There was a silk garment around her broad hips, tied with a cord, and this shook. Out of love towards her son, her breasts overflowed with milk and these too shook as the one with the excellent eyebrows tugged on the cord. Because of the exhaustion, the bangles on her arms and her earrings moved. There was perspiration on her face and *malati* flowers dropped from the braids of her hair as she churned. His mother was churning, but Hari desired her breasts. He

grasped the churning rod and lovingly restrained her. Out of love towards her son, she placed him on her lap and made him feed at her breasts. She looked at his smiling face. However, the milk was spilling over from the vessel. [1483] Therefore, she quickly left him, though he was still not satisfied. He became angry and bit his red and twitching lips with his teeth. He broke the vessel being used for churning curds with a piece of stone, displaying false tears. Having left, in a secret place that was inside, he started to eat the freshly churned butter. After setting down the hot milk, the gopi [1484] returned and saw the shattered vessel of curds. Though she realized that her son had done this, since she couldn't see him there, she laughed it away. He was standing on an overturned mortar, to reach the butter hanging overhead. As he pleased, he was feeding this to a monkey. Because he was engaged in an act of stealing butter, his eyes anxiously darted around. On seeing this, she slowly approached her son from the rear. Seeing her, with the stick in her hand, he quickly got down and as if he was scared, started to run away. The gopi followed him, but could not reach him. He cannot be reached by yogis whose minds are immersed in austerities. His mother was slender-waisted. But though she followed him, her movement was impeded by her large hips. As she swiftly followed, flowers were loosened from her dishevelled braids of hair and followed her trail. Finally, she caught him. Having committed a crime, he was weeping, rubbing his eyes with his own hands and smudging the collyrium. He looked up, his eyes filled with fear and bewilderment. She caught him by the hand and threatened to beat him. She was devoted to her son. Realizing that her son was scared, she threw the stick away. Not knowing about his valour, she desired to tie him down with some rope. He has no inside and no outside. There is nothing before him and nothing after him. He has no beginning and no end. He is inside and outside the universe. He is the universe. However, the unmanifest Adhokshaja had assumed the signs of a mortal and she took him to be her son. Like an ordinary person, the gopi tied him to a mortar with a piece of rope. Since her son had committed an offence, she tied him with rope. But the gopi found that it was short by a length of two fingers and therefore, she tied it to another piece of rope. Even when she added this new piece of

rope, it was short. As she continued to add more and more pieces of rope, it continued to be short by a length of two fingers. Thus, Yashoda added all the ropes that were there in her house. The gopis saw this and smiled. Though she was amazed, she smiled too. His mother was perspiring all over her body. The braids of her hair were dishevelled and the garlands were falling down. On seeing her exhaustion, Krishna was filled with compassion and allowed himself to be bound. O dear one! This shows that Hari is under the control of his devotees. This is despite Krishna being his own controller and despite everything being under the lord's control. Virinchi, Bhava and Shri, who is on his lap, did not receive as much of his favours as the gopi did. He is the one who grants liberation. The illustrious one, the gopi's son, is not easily obtained by those with bodies. In this world, learned ones who have realized the atman do not get him as easily as devotees do.

'His mother was anxiously engaged in her household tasks. The lord Krishna noticed two arjuna trees. [1485] Earlier, they had been two *guhyaka*s who were Dhanada's sons. Because of their insolence, those two prosperous ones had been cursed by Narada and had become trees. They had been known as Nalakubara and Manigriva.'

Chapter 10(10)

The king asked, 'O illustrious one! Speak about the reason for the curse. What reprehensible deed did they commit, so as to enrage [1486] the divine sage?'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'Dhanada's two sons became Rudra's companions and became extremely haughty. They were intoxicated in a beautiful grove in Kailasa, along the banks of the Mandakini. They drank the liquor known as *varuni* and their eyes rolled because of their intoxication. With women following them and singing, they roamed around in that flowering forest. They entered the waters of the Ganga, filled with clumps of blossoming lotuses. They pleasured themselves with young women, like two male elephants with female elephants. O Kourava! Wandering around as he wished,

the illustrious devarshi arrived there. Narada saw those two gods there and understood that they were intoxicated. On seeing him, the naked goddesses were ashamed, fearing a curse. They quickly covered themselves with garments. But the two guhyakas remained naked. He saw that those two sons of the gods were blind because of their prosperity and intoxicated with liquor. To show his favours to them, he cursed them and departed.

'Narada said, "Among all the attributes of rajas, enjoying objects of pleasure and insolence resulting from prosperity, there is nothing that causes as much of confounding of intelligence as women, gambling and liquor. Such people cannot control themselves and slaughter animals. This body will be destroyed, but they think that it will not be subject to old age and death. This body may be thought of as a divinity, but it will be reduced to worms, excrement or ashes. [1487] When a person causes harm to creatures, does he know what is good for him? Does he know that he will go to hell? Does this body belong to the person who gives it food, [1488] to the person who owns it, to the person who has impregnated with the semen or to the mother? Does it belong to the mother's father? [1489] Does it belong to the powerful? [1490] Does it belong to the purchaser? [1491] Does it belong to the fire? Does it belong to the dog? [1492] In general, this manifested body belongs to all these. However, it has been created through the powers of the unmanifest. With the exception of those who are wicked, which learned person will slay creatures? For wicked people who are blind with prosperity and intoxication, poverty is the best collyrium. A poor person compares himself with other creatures and realizes the supreme. When one's limbs have been pierced by a thorn, one does not desire this pain for other creatures, because he realizes that all creatures are the same. However, a person who has not been pierced by a thorn does not show these signs. A poor person is freed from ahamkara and is freed from all kinds of insolence. The difficulties that come to him by chance become like supreme austerities. A poor person is always hungry and his body is weak. He desires food. His senses are dried up and he refrains from violence. Virtuous people who are impartial in their attitude associated with the poor. Through association with the virtuous, such a poor person's thirst is quenched and he soon purifies himself. The virtuous are

impartial in their attitude and desire Mukunda's feet. Those who are insolent because of their wealth deserve to be ignored. Why will the virtuous associate with such wicked people? These two were intoxicated with varuni liquor. They were blind with the insolence of their prosperity. Associating with women, they were unable to conquer themselves. I will take away the ignorance of their insolence. Though these two were the sons of a guardian of the world, they were overwhelmed with tamas. They were filled with such great intoxication that they did not realize they were naked. Therefore, they deserve to be immobile [1493] so that this does not recur. However, because of my favours and grace, they will retain their memories. After one hundred divine years, they will come close to Vasudeva and will become devoted to him. They will then regain their status in heaven."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'Having said this, the devarshi went to Narayana's hermitage. Nalakubara and Manigriva became the twin arjuna trees. Hari wished to make the words of the rishi, foremost among devotees, come true. Therefore, he slowly went to the spot where the twin arjuna trees were. "I love the devarshi the most and these two are Dhanada's sons. I must thus accomplish what the great-souled one sung about." Krishna entered the space between the two arjuna trees. There was just enough space for him to enter and the mortar got stuck diagonally. With the rope around his stomach, the child tugged at the mortar and the roots of the trees were uprooted. As a result of his great valour, the trunks, with the branches and leaves, trembled and fell down, creating a terrible sound. From the space between the trees, two beings with perfected bodies emerged. They were like fires and their supreme radiance illuminated the directions. They joined their hands in salutation and bowed their heads down before Krishna, the lord of all the worlds. Completely cleansed, they said, "O Krishna! O great yogi! O Krishna! You are the supreme Purusha and we have met you today. Brahmanas know that the manifest and unmanifest universe are your forms. Your atman alone is in the bodies of all creatures. You are the lord of the senses. You alone are illustrious time. You are the lord, the undecaying Vishnu. You are Mahat. You are the subtle Prakriti, consisting of sattva, rajas and tamas. You are Purusha, the controller. You know about transforma-

tions and are in all kshetras. You cannot be grasped, yet you are sought to be grasped through the modifications of Prakriti and the gunas. [1494] You existed before all this, enveloped by the gunas. Who is worthy of knowing you? You are the illustrious Vasudeva, the origin of creation. Your radiance illuminates the gunas, but they shroud your greatness. We bow down to the brahman. You do not possess a body, but are known through the avataras and their forms. Those who possess bodies find it impossible to equal the unlimited valour you exhibit in those forms. For the welfare of all the worlds and their liberation, you have now descended in your own portion. You are the lord of benedictions. We bow down before the one who is supreme fortune. We bow down before the one who is supreme auspiciousness. We bow down before the serene Vasudeva, the lord of the Yadus. O lord! We are the servants of your follower. [1495] Please grant us permission to leave. It is through the favours of the illustrious rishi that we have been able to see you. May our speech recite your qualities. May our ears hear about your accounts. May our hands perform your tasks. May our minds seek out your feet. May we remember you and prostrate our heads before you, the one who resides everywhere in the universe. May our eyes see virtuous ones, who are nothing but your forms." The illustrious lord of Gokula was praised by them in this way. Tied by the rope to the mortar, he smiled and spoke to the guhyakas. The illustrious one said, "The rishi is full of compassion and I had known what had happened. Because of your prosperity and intoxication, the two of you were blind. He cursed you and dislodged you, but he actually did you a favour. The virtuous are impartial in outlook and their minds are completely immersed in me. A being no longer suffers bondage after seeing me. I am like the sun to the eyes. O Nalakubara! [1496] Since you are supremely devoted to me, go to your abodes. Your minds have been attracted to me. You have obtained the desired supreme. After this, there is no rebirth." Addressed in this way, the two of them repeatedly circumambulated him and bowed down before him. Taking their leave of the one who was tied to the mortar, they left in the northern direction.'

Chapter 10(11)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O best among the Kurus! Nanda and the other gopas heard the sound of the trees falling down. Fearing a storm, they rushed to the spot. They saw the twin arjuna trees, fallen down on the ground. Unable to determine the reason why these had fallen down, they were confused. With a rope, the child was tied to the mortar and he was dragging it. How did this extraordinary event take place? Who caused this disturbance? They were agitated. The boys said, "He did this, by dragging himself between them and the mortar got stuck diagonally. We have also seen two resplendent beings." They did not believe what had been said. It could not have happened that way. How could the child have uprooted the trees? However, there were doubts in the minds of some of them. Nanda saw his son tied to the mortar with a rope, dragging it. With a smile on his face, he released him.

'Sometimes, encouraged by the gopis, the illustrious one danced like a child. Sometimes, he sang and enchanted them. He was like a wooden puppet under their control. Sometimes, he would be asked to fetch seats or sandals. Sometimes, he would be unable to raise these objects and fling his arms around, causing delight to his relatives. He shows himself in this way to the world, subservient to his servants. Through his childish efforts, the illustrious one brought joy to the residents of Vraja. "Come and purchase my fruit." Once, hearing this, Achyuta, the granter of all fruits, took some grain and quickly went to the vendor, desiring fruit. But the grain fell down from his two hands. However, the female fruit vendor filled his hands with fruit and the basket of fruit was instantly filled with jewels. Once, after the incident with the uprooted arjuna trees, Krishna went to the banks of the river, along with Rama. With other boys, they were deeply engaged in playing and the goddess Rohini went to summon them. Since they were engaged in playing, the two sons did not return when they were called. Therefore, Rohini dispatched Yashoda, who was devoted to the sons. Though it was extremely late, her son continued to play with his elder brother. Yashoda summoned Krishna, the love for her son making milk flow out of her breasts. "O Krishna! O lotus-eyed one! O Krishna! O son! Come and drink

the milk at my breasts. There has been enough of playing. You must be hungry and exhausted. O son! You must be tired of playing. O Rama! O son! O delight of the lineage! With your younger brother, come quickly. You ate in the morning. You should eat now. Dasharha, the lord of Vraja, [1497] is waiting to eat. Do what we desire. Come here, the two of you. O boys! Go to your own homes. O son! Your limbs are grey with dust. Go and wash yourself. The nakshatra of your birth is in the ascendant today. Purify yourself and give cattle to brahmanas. Look at your friends. Look. After cleaning them, their mothers have ornamented them. You too should bathe and eat your food. After that, ornamented properly, play again." O king! He was the crest of everything. But thus, Yashoda regarded him as her son and her mind was tied to him by bonds of affection. With Rama, she took Achyuta by the hand and took him to her own house, performing all the auspicious rites thereafter.

'The aged gopas, Nanda and the others, felt these great evil portents in the great forest. They assembled together and discussed what should be done about Vraja. There was a gopa named Upananda, superior to everyone in knowledge. He knew about objectives at the right time and place and wished to do what would be good for Rama and Krishna. "Let all our well-wishers leave Gokula now. There are extremely evil portents here and these might cause the destruction of our sons. In some way, the child was saved from the rakshasi who killed children. [1498] It was only because of Hari's favours that the cart did not fall on him. He faced the danger of being taken up into the sky by a daitya in the form of a whirlwind. [1499] He fell down on a piece of rock, but the lords of the gods saved him. The child was taken to the place between the trees, but did not die, nor did any other child. That is because he was protected by Achyuta. Before other evil portents cause harm to Vraja, let us leave. Taking the children with us, we and our followers should go somewhere else. There is a forest named Vrindavana. It has new pasture ground for the animals. There are sacred mountains, plants and trees there and it is a good place for gopas, gopis and the cattle. Let us go there today. Without any delay, let the carts be yoked. If it so appeals to you, let the wealth of cattle be placed in front of us." On hearing his words,

all the gopas applauded them and they were all of the same view. They yoked their own respective vehicles and readied their garments and equipment. O king! The aged, the young, women and all the equipment were placed in carts in the front. With bows and arrows, the cowherds attentively followed. The wealth of cattle was placed in the front. Horns were sounded in every direction. With the great blare of trumpets, they proceeded, along with their priests. The gopis were astride chariots, their bodies and breasts beautiful with freshly applied kunkuma. There were necklaces of gold coins around their necks and they were attired in excellent garments. They happily chanted about Krishna's pastimes. Yashoda and Rohini were radiant astride a single cart, along with Krishna and Rama. They were eager to hear about these accounts. They entered Vrindavana, a place that was delightful in all the seasons. Arranging the carts in the form of a half circle, they fashioned a place to reside in. O king! On seeing Vrindavana, Govardhana and the sandbanks of Yamuna, Rama and Madhava were filled with great delight. Through their childish efforts, they brought pleasure to the residents of Vraja. In the course of time, they started to speak broken words and also tend to the calves. Not very far from where the residents of Vraja dwelt, along with the sons of the cowherds, they would take the calves out to pasture, with many kinds of toys and garments with them. Sometimes, they would play with flutes. Sometimes, they would use catapults to fling stones. [1500] Sometimes, they kicked with their feet and the bells tinkled. Sometimes, they would pretend to be bulls and cows. Imitating bulls, they bellowed and fought against each other. They imitated the sounds of animals and wandered around like ordinary children.

'On one occasion, on the banks of the Yamuna, Krishna and Bala were tending to the calves, along with their own friends. Wishing to kill them, a daitya arrived. It assumed the form of a calf and Hari noticed that it had penetrated the leaders of the calves. He showed it to Baladeva and approached it slowly, as if he did not know. Achutya seized it by the hind legs and the tail. He whirled it around and flung it on the top of a kapittha tree, where it died. The gigantic body [1501] fell down, bringing down the kapittha tree too. Seeing this, the children were delighted and praised him in words

of applause. The gods rejoiced and showered down flowers. The two guardians of all the worlds became two protectors of calves. Taking their breakfast with them, they roamed around, taking the calves out to pasture. On one occasion, each of them took all his respective calves to a water tank, so that they might drink water. After the calves drank, they also drank water. The boys saw a great being standing there. It was like the summit of a mountain, brought down by the vajra, and they were terrified. This was a great asura named Baka and it had assumed the form of a stork. [1502] The powerful one suddenly approached and seized Krishna in its sharp beak. On seeing Krishna swallowed by the great stork, Rama and the other boys were overwhelmed and lost their senses. They seemed to be unconscious, without any life. The father of the preceptor of the universe [1503] was in the form of a cowherd's son. Like a fire, he burnt the top of its palate. In great rage, it immediately spat him, still unhurt, out of its mouth. It then again struck him with its beak, so as to kill him. As it descended, the lord of the virtuous, caught Baka, Kamsa's friend, by the two halves of the bill. While the boys watched, he playfully tore these apart, like tearing a blade of grass. The residents of heaven were filled with joy. Baka's enemies, residents of the world of the gods, showered down mallika and other flowers from Nandana. They applauded him and played on drums and conch shells. The sons of the cowherds gazed in wonder. When Rama and the other boys saw that he had returned from Baka's mouth, it was as if life and senses had returned to all of them. Now that he had been freed, they embraced him. Collecting the calves, they returned to Vraja [1504] and recounted what had happened. Hearing this, the amazed gopas and gopis welcomed this joyous news. It was as if he had returned from the world of the dead and they eagerly looked at him, with thirsty eyes. "This is amazing. This child has faced many kinds of threats from death. However, those who initially sought to create fear have themselves faced something disagreeable. Assuming terrible forms, they arrived, but were unable to attack or kill him. When they approached, they were destroyed, like insects by a fire. The words spoken by a person who knows about the brahman are never false. Everything is happening exactly as the illustrious Garga said it would." Thus, Nanda and the other gopas,

rejoiced and spoke about Krishna and Rama's account. This brought them pleasure and they did not experience any hardships from life on earth. In this way, the two boys spent their childhood in Vraja. They played hide-and-seek and building bridges and leaping over them like monkeys.' [1505]

The Tenth Skandha will be continued in Volume 3.

[1] For example, *shloka*s 2.4.10, 4.1.2 and 4.5.11 of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad use the two expressions together.
[2] Chandogya Upanishad, 7.1.2.
[3] *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, F.E. Pargiter, Oxford University Press, London, 1922.
[4] Sutas were bards, minstrels, raconteurs.
[5] Ugrashravas was a suta.
[6] The Critical Edition of the Valmiki Ramayana was brought out by the Baroda Oriental Institute, now part of the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda. The Critical Edition of the Mahabharata was brought out by the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune.
[7] The Bhagavad Gita translation was published in 2006, the translation of the Critical Edition of the Mahabharata in ten volumes between 2010 and 2014 (with a box set in 2015) and the translation of the Critical Edition of the Valmiki Ramayana in 2017. The translations are by Bibek Debroy, and in each case, the publisher is Penguin.
[8] *The Bhagavatamahapuranam*, Nag Publishers, Delhi, 1987. This is a reprint of the Kshemaraja Shrikrishnadass, Venkateshvara Press, Bombay, text.
[9] https://web.archive.org/web/20081012022829/http://www.sub.uni-goettingen.de/ebene_1/fiindolo/gretil/1_sanskr/3_purana/bhagp/bhp1-12u.htm
[10] http://www.ochs.org.uk/research/bhagavata-purana-research-project
[11] *The Bhagavata Purana, Selected Readings*, Ravi M. Gupta and Kenneth R. Valpey, Columbia University Press, 2016.
[12] *Krishna: The Beautiful Legend of God (Srimad Bhagavata Purana Book X)*, Edwin Bryant, Penguin Classics, 2004.
[13] *A Prose English Translation of Srimad Bhagavatam*, Manmatha Nath Dutt, H.C. Dass, Calcutta, 1896.
[14] *Srimad Bhagavatam*, Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, 1970 to 1977.
[15] *The Bhagavata Purana*, translated and annotated by Ganesh Vasudeo Tagare, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi, 1976.
[16] *Srimad Bhagavada*, Swami Tapasyananda, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Chennai, 1980.
[17] *Srimad Bhagavata Mahapurana with Sanskrit Text and English Translation*, C.L. Goswami and M.A. Shastri, Gita Press, 2006.

[18] *A Study of the Bhagavata Purana or Esoteric Hinduism,* Purnendu Narayana Sinha, Freeman and Company, Benares, 1901.

[19] Two of the six Indian schools of *darshana* (philosophy).

[1] The one who is spoken about in excellent shlokas, Vishnu.
[2] The highest state of asceticism and meditation.
[3] The supreme soul.
[4] Svayambhuva Manu.
[5] Brahma.
[6] The three qualities (guna) of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*.
[7] Celestial vehicles.
[8] Siddhas are sages who have been successful in attaining their objectives.
[9] Gandharvas are celestial musicians and are semi-divine.
[10] Relatively minor gods.
[11] Celestial singers.
[12] Brahma arrived while Narada was instructing Priyavrata.
[13] Manu and Priyavrata. At that time, Manu had also arrived.
[14] Vishnu.
[15] The five senses and the mind.
[16] To the subsequent *ashrama*s.
[17] Brahma.
[18] The path of devotion.
[19] The supreme soul.
[20] The individual soul.
[21] Priyavrata.
[22] A period during which a Manu presides and rules over creation.
[23] The three sons mentioned earlier, Kavi, Mahavira and Savana.
[24] One arbuda is ten million.
[25] Mount Meru.
[26] Priyavrata.
[27] Across Puranas, the names and the order of the islands (dvipas) marginally varies.
[28] The seven oceans are Lavana, Kshira, Sura, Ghrita, Ikshu, Dadhi and Svadu. These have been speculatively identified as Lavana (Indian Ocean), Kshira (Shirwan, part of the Caspian Sea), Sura (Sarain, the remaining part of the Caspian Sea), Ghrita (Erythraean Sea), Ikshu (the river Oxus), Dadhi (Dahae, the Aral Sea) and Svadu (Tchadun, the river in Mongolia). The terms used here for the composition are *kshara* (salt water), *ikshu-rasa* (sugar cane juice), *sura* (liquor), *ghrita* (clarified butter), *kshira* (milk), *dadhi-manda* (curds) and *suddhoda* (fresh water).
[29] Kavi, Mahavira and Savana were not interested.

[30] Shukracharya, also known as Kavya.
[31] One with long strides, Vishnu's name.
[32] The five senses and the mind.
[33] Obtained by getting a son.
[34] Mount Mandara.
[35] Brahma.
[36] Kama, the god of love. Makaradhvaja (the one with a *makara* on his standard) is one of Kama's names.
[37] Who could not distinguish between man and woman.
[38] The eyebrows.
[39] Meaning the glances.
[40] Because of the fragrance in Purvachitti's body, bees were circling her. These are the disciples.
[41] Partridge.
[42] Meaning the breasts. Instead of mounds, one can also translate them as horns.
[43] Purvachitti was chewing betel leaf.
[44] A makara is a mythical aquatic creature, but can loosely be translated as shark or crocodile. Earrings like makaras.
[45] Meaning swans.
[46] And has therefore sent you here.
[47] *Varsha*; varsha is a subdivision of dvipa.
[48] Gifts given to brahmanas after the sacrifice.
[49] Koustubha.
[50] Nabhi.
[51] The objectives of human existence—dharma, *artha*, *kama* and *moksha*.
[52] We are worshipping you for the purusharthas.
[53] Hence, Nabhi is not asking for anything more.
[54] The hymn should have been in poetry. Nabhi bows down before the priests, who praised the illustrious one.
[55] As in Bharatavarsha.
[56] Vishnudatta is one of Parikshit's names.
[57] The word used is *shramana*. Literally, the text states that the mendicants are clad in air.
[58] Meaning best or excellent.
[59] After Nabhi, this varsha was initially known as Ajanabha. It came to be known as Bharatavarsha later.

[60] Vasudeva's.
[61] Dakshina.
[62] Jayanti was Indra's daughter.
[63] 'Both' is interpreted as the *shruti* and *smriti* texts.
[64] This occurs later, in the Ninth Skandha.
[65] That is, he behaved like an ordinary human being.
[66] This is reminiscent of 3.21 of the Bhagavad Gita.
[67] The supreme soul.
[68] The traditional four means are sama (conciliation or negotiation), *dana* (bribery), *danda* (punishment) and *bheda* (dissension).
[69] Interpreted as something that belonged to someone else and was therefore non-existent.
[70] Such as pigs and dogs.
[71] In an earlier life.
[72] Past deeds.
[73] Gratification of the senses.
[74] *Ahamkara*.
[75] Brahma.
[76] Spiritual truth.
[77] Celibacy.
[78] Restraint.
[79] We have translated vijnana as self-knowledge, the transcendental consciousness. We will use jnana for knowledge.
[80] The subtle body.
[81] Ego.
[82] The yoga should not become an end in itself.
[83] He should not get angry if they do not listen.
[84] The cycle of life.
[85] Pramatha is a tormentor and is used for a ghost or goblin.
[86] Virinchi or Brahma.
[87] The body is interpreted as the Vedas.
[88] A householder has to maintain three fires, ahavaniya, *garhapatya* and *dakshinatya*.
[89] An avadhuta is an ascetic who has renounced all worldly attachments. However, it also has the nuance of someone who has been cast off from society and has been excluded by it.
[90] A malevolent being that survives on human flesh.

[91] The body and the atman.
[92] A yojana is a measure of distance, between 8 and 9 miles.
[93] Emancipation.
[94] Yoga leads to eight major siddhis or powers. These are *anima* (becoming as small as one desires), *mahima* (as large as one desires), *laghima* (as light as one wants), *garima* (as heavy as one wants), *prapti* (obtaining what one wants), *prakamya* (travelling where one wants), *vashitvam* (powers to control creatures) and *ishitvam* (obtaining divine powers).
[95] Therefore, he didn't use them.
[96] Why did Rishabha dislike them?
[97] Shri-Shuka.
[98] A cunning hunter does not trust an animal that has been captured.
[99] Because of distractions.
[100] With the mind.
[101] Konka has speculatively been identified with Konkana, Venka with the Venkatadri hill and Kutaka with the Kutaka hill near Nagpur.
[102] Rishabha.
[103] Bharatavarsha.
[104] The speaker and the listener.
[105] The wheel of life, the circle of birth and death.
[106] Detachment from fruits and renunciation of action.
[107] The Pandavas.
[108] Rishabha.
[109] Five *tanmatra*s or subtle elements and five *mahabhuta*s or gross elements,
[110] A yajna and a kratu are both sacrifices. However, the former is performed with a sacrificial post and the latter without one. More specifically, the former is performed with sacrificial animals and the latter without sacrificing animals.
[111] Apurva means the forces and powers harnessed through a sacrifice.
[112] Bharata.
[113] The adhvaryu is the assistant priest and is accomplished in the Yajur Veda.
[114] River Gandaki.
[115] This is reminiscent of the *gayatri mantra*.
[116] A muhurta is a measure of time equal to forty-eight minutes.
[117] A lion.

[118] As a metaphor for time and destiny.
[119] The fawn got tired from running around.
[120] Were the fawn ever to go away.
[121] The sun.
[122] The footprints of a black antelope mark an auspicious spot for a sacrifice.
[123] Pulastya and Pulaha's hermitage was in Shalagrama. Kalanjara is the name of a famous mountain. As a deer, Bharata had been born in Kalanjara.
[124] Place of pilgrimage.
[125] These nine sons were born through the elder wife.
[126] After this, he would be liberated and would not be born again.
[127] There are thirteen samskaras or sacraments. The list varies a bit. But one list is *vivaha* (marriage), *garbhalambhana* (conception), *pumshavana* (engendering a male child), *simantonnayana* (parting the hair, performed in the fourth month of pregnancy), *jatakarma* (birth rites), *namakarana* (naming), *chudakarma* (tonsure), *annaprashana* (first solid food), *keshanta* (first shaving of the head), *upanayana (*sacred thread), *vidyarambha (*commencement of studies), samavartana (graduation) and *antyeshti* (funeral rites). After samavartana, one ceases to be a student and becomes (usually) a householder.
[128] Bharata.
[129] The savitri (gayatri) mantra has three padas. Vyahriti means the words *bhuh, bhuvah* and *svah*, uttered after Oum.
[130] The father's.
[131] Without wages.
[132] One who is a brahmana only in name.
[133] While this means *shudra*, it also means outcast.
[134] A form of the goddess Kali. The text does not clearly indicate whether the sacrificial animal had escaped, or whether another man, who was no more than an animal, had escaped. Either interpretation is possible. The sacrifice is offered at night.
[135] The left one of his lotus feet was placed on his right thigh and his left hand was on his left knee.
[136] The word used is *panis*.
[137] Several layers of interpretation are possible. Violence is sanctioned when there is danger and there was no danger now. Human sacrifices are meant

to be token and notional, not actual. Even if there is a human sacrifice, it should not be that of a brahmana. Even if a brahmana is sacrificed, it should not be such an excellent brahmana.

[138] These two kingdoms are often mentioned in conjunction, as one kingdom. Sindhu was probably to the west of the River Sindhu and Souvira to the east.

[139] So that he did not step on a living creature by mistake.

[140] Danda or punishment as the fourth mode.

[141] That of a *kshatriya*.

[142] Bharata's.

[143] Rahugana's.

[144] Yama.

[145] The essence is that 'I' am not my body.

[146] Of you as the master and I as the servant.

[147] If I have realized my atman, I no longer identify myself with my body, which will be punished. And if I am mad, I will not comprehend the punishment.

[148] Whose son or disciple are you?

[149] Interpreted as—are you the sage Kapila?

[150] Rahugana was going to meet Kapila.

[151] If a king punishes subjects to make them follow their own dharma, that is Achyuta's service, it must be beneficial.

[152] Such as between the master and the servant.

[153] Of the Vedas.

[154] The sixteen are the five gross elements, the ten organs of perception and action and the mind, the mind being the chief.

[155] From one life to another.

[156] *Kshetra* is the field, that is, the body. Kshetrajna is one who knows the body, that is, the soul, both human and universal.

[157] The body.

[158] Mind as the eleventh and ahamkara as the twelfth.

[159] By those who are deluded.

[160] The six enemies or vices are kama (desire), *krodha* (anger), *lobha* (avarice), *moha* (delusion), *mada* (pride) and *matsarya* (jealousy).

[161] The mind.

[162] Carrying the load and fatigue, the master and the servant.

[163] The palanquin bearers.

[164] A paramanu is an ultimate particle characterized by the trait that it cannot be divided further. It alone is combined with others.
[165] Worshipping water, fire or the sun. Performing austerities in water, before a fire or exposed to the sun is a better interpretation.
[166] Artha means dharma, artha and kama.
[167] The six senses and the mind, the mind being the leader.
[168] The image of the forest.
[169] As a metaphor for something that is unreal.
[170] The image is of a caravan lost in the forest.
[171] There is a double meaning, with the menstrual cycle of a woman indicated. Thus, the whirlwind is a metaphor for attraction towards women. All the other metaphors are subject to detailed interpretations.
[172] Minor gods.
[173] Honey.
[174] There are four elephants that dwell in the four directions. These are known as diggaja, the elephant (*gaja*) for a direction (*dik*).
[175] The arms of women.
[176] A metaphor for death or past deeds.
[177] That is, Bharata.
[178] Rahugana.
[179] Parikshit.
[180] The five senses and the mind.
[181] The five senses.
[182] Of weeds and grass.
[183] Literally, a pishacha who carries fire in the night. The phosphorent glow known as will-of-the-wisp.
[184] Karaskara is a poisonous medicinal plant and karatunda is the dark Agallochum.
[185] They are dead.
[186] The fire of hunger.
[187] 'Both' is subject to different kinds of interpretation, such as in this life or the next, or *pravritti* and nivritti.
[188] Of the king or the husband. Devadatta and Vishnumitra are names for any individuals, like 'X' and 'Y'.
[189] Destiny, nature and one's own nature, respectively.
[190] *Kakinika*, a very small amount, twenty cowries or less.
[191] Of a woman.

[192] One parardha is fifty years of Brahma's life.
[193] In this life, or in a past life.
[194] One of the schools of *darshana* (philosophy).
[195] Devatajit's son.
[196] Pratiha's mother and wife had the same name.
[197] These daughters are Shraddha, Maitri and Daya, the personified forms of faith, friendship and compassion.
[198] Viraja.
[199] We have deliberately used the word 'ultimate'. The word used is *charama*. Therefore, one can take this either as the last son, or the greatest son.
[200] Jambudvipa.
[201] A great mountain.
[202] Jambudvipa.
[203] Meru's root extends inside the earth for sixteen thousand yojanas. Therefore, it rises eighty-four thousand yojanas from the surface of the earth.
[204] Kshara.
[205] The wording is such that this can be interpreted in different ways. The same length and breadth, but one-tenth the height, or the same height and breadth, but one-tenth the length.
[206] Charanas, gandharvas, apsaras, *vidyadhara*s, *kinnara*s.
[207] Yakshas.
[208] A vyama is a measure of length. It is the distance between the tips of the fingers of the two hands, when the arms are extended out.
[209] Of Meru.
[210] Brahma.
[211] Since it is made out of gold, *shatakumbha* meaning gold.
[212] Indra's Amaravati to the east, Agni's Tejovati to the south-east, Yama's Samyamini to the south, Nirrita's Krishnagana to the south-west, Varuna's Shraddhavati to the west, Vayu's Gandhavati to the north-west, Kubera's Mahodaya to the north and Shiva's Yashovati to the north-east.
[213] Compared to Brahma's city.
[214] This is a reference to Bali's sacrifice and the *vamana* incarnation. Specifically, the description is of Vishnu taking the second step.
[215] The egg.
[216] From the feet of the illustrious one. This is the river Ganga.
[217] Dhruva.
[218] In Dhruvaloka.

[219] The saptarshis are the seven great sages. The list varies, but the standard one is Marichi, Atri, Angiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu and Vasishtha. In the sky, the saptarshis are identified with the constellation of Ursa Major (Great Bear).
[220] On Meru.
[221] In *satya yuga*, people are not interested in sexual pleasures and there are too many miseries in *dvapara* and kali yuga.
[222] In the Ninth Skandha.
[223] Vasudeva, Pradyumna, Samkarshana and Aniruddha.
[224] Madhu is honey and asava is liquor made through distillation, not mere fermentation.
[225] Serpents. Nagas (also known as uragas) are different from snakes. They are semi-divine, can assume any form at will and reside in specific locations.
[226] As Shesha.
[227] Associated with rajas and tamas, respectively.
[228] Hayagriva.
[229] There are seven nether regions—*atala*, *vitala*, *sutala*, rasatala, *talatala*, *mahatala* and *patala*.
[230] Brahma.
[231] Narasimha.
[232] In the Seventh Skandha.
[233] Prahlada.
[234] Daityas are a specific category of demons, the progeny of Diti.
[235] Demons, progeny of Danu.
[236] *Kshroum* is a mystic *akshara* used to worship Narasimha.
[237] Presumably meaning that the attachment has not matured.
[238] If the lifespan for a human is 100 years, theirs is 360x100 = 36,000 years.
[239] The chakra.
[240] Kamadeva's.
[241] Lakshmi.
[242] All three are mystic aksharas, *bija*s.
[243] The ten senses, five objects of the senses and the mind.
[244] Day and night.
[245] On your chest.
[246] The attention to Lakshmi is token, while that to devotees is substantial.

[247] The fish incarnation.
[248] The turtle or tortoise incarnation.
[249] Demons.
[250] Constellations.
[251] The twenty-four principles of samkhya.
[252] Since sacrifices disappear in kali yuga, this form is not manifested then.
[253] Hiranyaksha.
[254] Paramatman.
[255] In the Valmiki Ramayana, Rama exiled Lakshmana.
[256] The two sages, Nara and Narayana, are often referred to jointly in the singular.
[257] A kalpa is the longer cycle of creation and destruction.
[258] The four classes and four stages of life, respectively.
[259] Narada.
[260] Brahma.
[261] The one without qualities or attributes, the brahman.
[262] Respectively associated with sattva, rajas and tamas.
[263] Of Bharatavarsha.
[264] A forest-dwelling bird may be captured by a fowler and escape, only to be caught again. The cycle of birth and death is like that.
[265] Bharatavarsha.
[266] This seems to be the place where the chant of the gods and Narada's quote both end.
[267] Sagara's sons were looking for the horse from a horse sacrifice.
[268] That is, 100,000 yojanas.
[269] That is, 200,000 yojanas.
[270] This is the mantra used by the inhabitants of Plaksha-dvipa.
[271] This is interpreted as auspicious and inauspicious results respectively.
[272] The silk-cotton tree.
[273] Garuda.
[274] The four varnas there.
[275] The dark lunar fortnight.
[276] The bright lunar fortnight, when the moon waxes.
[277] This is the mantra used by the inhabitants of Shalmali-dvipa.
[278] The four varnas there.
[279] This is the mantra used by the inhabitants of Kusha-dvipa.
[280] Guha/Kartikeya shattered Krouncha with his spear.

[281] The four varnas there.
[282] Varuna.
[283] The four varnas there.
[284] Breathing.
[285] This is the mantra used by the inhabitants of Shaka-dvipa.
[286] *Pushkara*, thus giving the region its name.
[287] Brahma.
[288] Shri-Shuka.
[289] The ocean of sweet water.
[290] Respectively, *loka* and *aloka*. Alternatively, this can be interpreted as a region inhabited by living entities and one not inhabited by living entities.
[291] Brahma.
[292] Atop Lokaloka.
[293] The area not illuminated by the sun.
[294] *Mrita* (inanimate) *anda* (egg).
[295] *Hiranya* (golden) *garbha* (origin).
[296] The terrestrial sphere and the heavenly sphere.
[297] Respectively, vernal equinox, autumnal equinox and when the sun passes through the equator.
[298] Capricorn.
[299] Signs of the zodiac.
[300] Respectively, Aries and Libra.
[301] A ghatika is twenty-four minutes. Day and night are equal in Aries. Day keeps on progressively increasing from Vrisha (Taurus), Mithuna (Gemini), Karkata (Cancer), Simha (Leo) to Virgo (Kanya). Night keeps on progressively increasing from Vrishchika (Scorpio), Dhanu (Saggitarius), Makara (Capricon), Kumba (Aquarius) to Mina (Pisces).
[302] On Meru.
[303] There is an interpretation we have skipped, because it is not directly there in the text. The sun faces the stellar spheres and moves to the east, with Meru to the left. But there is a wind that blows, keeping Meru to the right. The force of this makes the sun move in the opposite direction, so on and so forth.
[304] 23,775,000 yojanas.
[305] That is, six hours.

[306] The spokes are the months, the segments of the rim are the seasons and the naves are periods of four months each.
[307] The sun's charioteer.
[308] Gayatri, Brihati, Ushnika, Jagati, Trishtubh, Anushtubh and Pankti.
[309] As a mark of respect to the sun god.
[310] Valakhilyas are those who subsist on fresh fruit.
[311] For each month, there are separate names for the sun's attendants. These will be recounted in the Twelfth Skandha.
[312] A gavyuti is a measure of distance, equal to two *krosha*s (four miles) or one krosha (two miles).
[313] Shri-Shuka.
[314] The sun god.
[315] Day and night.
[316] Without Abhijit, there are twenty-seven nakshatras.
[317] Shukra, Venus.
[318] Such as Mars.
[319] Mercury.
[320] Mars.
[321] Jupiter.
[322] Saturn.
[323] Thirty years.
[324] Saptarshi, Ursa Major.
[325] *Shishumara*. The constellation is in the shape of a dolphin and the names of the stars in the constellation follow.
[326] The fourteen from Abhijit to Punarvasu for uttarayana and the fourteen from Pushya to Uttarashadha for dakshinayana.
[327] Ajavithi means the three nakshatras that indicate dakshinayana—Mula, Purvashadha and Uttarashadha. Akasha-Ganga is the Milky Way.
[328] Magha to Anuradha.
[329] Mrigashirsha to Purvabhadrapada, but in the reverse order, from Purvabhadrapada to Mrigashirsha.
[330] Canopus.
[331] Venus.
[332] Prana is the breath of life or the life force. Prana draws breath into the body, apana exhales it.
[333] The twilight zone.
[334] Morning, midday and evening.

[335] In the Sixth and Eighth Skandhas.
[336] In Rahu's getting a share of the amrita.
[337] The sun and the moon.
[338] Ten thousand yojanas below Rahu.
[339] *Vidya* means knowledge. Thus vidyadhara, one who holds knowledge.
[340] Ten thousand yojanas.
[341] Nagas.
[342] The word chaitya has several meanings—sacrificial shed, temple, altar, sanctuary and a tree that grows along the road.
[343] Svairinis are loose women who have sex with anyone they want, but only with those from the same varna. In this context, kaminis are loose women who have sex with anyone they want, irrespective of varna. Pumshchalis have no sense of discrimination are almost like harlots.
[344] Atala.
[345] Vitala.
[346] Bali.
[347] These sections are subject to diverse interpretations.
[348] Bali.
[349] Prahlada.
[350] Hiranyakashipu.
[351] Bali's, in the Eighth Skandha.
[352] The gate to Bali's world.
[353] The one with the ten shoulders is Ravana. Narayana hurled him away.
[354] Sutala.
[355] Shiva.
[356] Maya obtained it through Shiva's grace.
[357] Talatala.
[358] Alternatively, they are prone to anger.
[359] Mahatala.
[360] The panis stole cows and hid them. Indra sent Sarama as a messenger, cursing the panis.
[361] Rasatala.
[362] Patala.
[363] Ahamkara manifests itself in three forms—vaikarika, *taijasa* and tamasa.
[364] *Samkarshanam* is the act of drawing together, attracting.
[365] Alternatively, vaijayanti is not a separate necklace, but a garland made out of tulasi, *kunda, mandara, parijata* and lotuses.

[366] A gandharva.
[367] Two paramanus make up one anu.
[368] In addition to the twenty-one, adding up to a total of twenty-eight.
[369] *Tamisra* means darkness.
[370] *Andha-tamisra* means blinding darkness.
[371] Ruru has several meanings. Here, it means a savage animal.
[372] The name Kumbhipaka is derived from cooking in a pot.
[373] The name Kalasutra is derived from the rope/bondage of time/destiny.
[374] When there are calamities, deviations are permitted.
[375] The name is derived from leaves that are like swords.
[376] The name Sukara-mukha is not explained. It is probably based on the sound that such people make from their mouths.
[377] Literally, blind pit.
[378] A householder has to perform five yajnas—studying, worshipping the ancestors, worshipping the gods, sharing food with humans and sharing food with non-human creatures.
[379] Thus the name Krimi-bhojana.
[380] In the hell known as Sandamsha, *sandamsha* means to tear out.
[381] Hence the hell named Tapta-surmi, based on hot image.
[382] Including animals.
[383] He is impaled on a silk-cotton (shalmali) tree with thorns that are like the vajra and dragged down from there, so that the thorns tear out his flesh.
[384] The river.
[385] In the hell named Puyoda, derived from the word for pus.
[386] In the hell named Prana-rodha, derived from the breath of life being obstructed.
[387] The same as Vishasana, the name is derived from the word for killing.
[388] That is, belonging to the first three varnas.
[389] This is the hell named Lala-bhoksha, literally, a place where one is made to drink spittle.
[390] In the hell named Sarameya-adana, derived from eaten by dogs.
[391] The name Avichi is derived from this.
[392] In the hell named Ayoh-pana, derived from drinking iron.
[393] Literally, alkaline mud.
[394] In the hell named Raksha-gana-bhojana, derived from being eaten by rakshasas. Those who were killed in this world become the rakshasas in the next world.

[395] In the hell named Shulaprota, the name being derived from transfixed with spears.
[396] Venomous serpents.
[397] In the hell named Avata-nirodhana, derived from being confined in a hole.
[398] In the hell named Paryavartana.
[399] With a mouth like a needle.
[400] The Second Skandha.

[401] In the Second and Third Skandhas.
[402] Pravritti is action with a desire for the fruits.
[403] *Prayashchitta*.
[404] Which becomes dirty again.
[405] Rituals.
[406] The linga sharira.
[407] Alternatively, subsequent births.
[408] From the present season, one can deduce the preceding and succeeding seasons.
[409] Without birth, Brahma.
[410] This is a complicated shloka and is subject to diverse interpretations. The reference seems to be to Yama, who resides in his capital city of Samyamini. He can contemplate a being's past and future lives.
[411] This is interpreted as a person who is dreaming. Since he does not know about his past and future lives, he identifies with what is manifest, the present physical body.
[412] The mind.
[413] The atman.
[414] This can be interpreted as superior, medium and inferior, or happy, unhappy and mixed.
[415] The three potencies are sattva, rajas and tamas. The sixteen have already been mentioned. They can also mean the five organs of action, the five senses, the five gross elements and the mind.
[416] The five senses and the mind.
[417] This is Bhagavad Gita 3.5, almost verbatim.
[418] Resulting from former lives.
[419] Destiny.
[420] The linga sharira and the gross body.
[421] The body may be like that of the mother or like that of the father, but innate nature is stronger than either.
[422] Ajamila.
[423] Alternatively, female servant.
[424] Maireya is liquor made from molasses or grain.
[425] Loose woman.
[426] This is Bhagavad Gita 3.21, almost verbatim.
[427] The master's. In this case, Yama's.
[428] Not exactly, but roughly, akshara is a syllable.

[429] Na-ra-ya-na.
[430] Vishnu's.
[431] That is, the consequences of the acts.
[432] Gangadvara usually refers to Har ki Pauri in Haridvara/Haridwar.
[433] Sattva, rajas and tamas.
[434] Acting chaotically and without cohesion.
[435] The words used are *ota* (cross-threads or woof) and *prota* (length-wise or warp).
[436] Varuna.
[437] The Prajapatis.
[438] Sanatkumara.
[439] Shuka himself.
[440] The three Vedas.
[441] The sage Agastya.
[442] Ugrashrava, the son of Romaharshana or Lomaharshana. A *suta* was a charioteer, but also a bard and raconteur. Here, it is a proper name for Ugrashrava.
[443] Marisha. Her mother was the apsara Pramlocha.
[444] A chant or mantra.
[445] The body.
[446] Subtle elements.
[447] Prakriti, Mahat, ahamkara, the mind and the five tanmatras (the five subtle elements).
[448] This shloka has complicated interpretations, as do some subsequent ones. The way we have translated it, Vishnu is the fifteenth principle, the other fourteen being the ten sense organs, the mind, intelligence, the breath of life and Pradhana. Alternatively, there is a *samidheni* hymn, recited when a sacrificial fire is ignited from kindling, and this has fifteen verses.
[449] Smells and fragrances, which are not actually the wind.
[450] The Prajapatis.
[451] Before creation.
[452] Narada.
[453] Their effects are transient.
[454] This is a reference to the fourth (*turiya*) state, explained in the Seventh Skandha. The three preceding ones are *vishva*, taijasa and *prajna*. Pro-

gressively, the atman identifies with the gross (vishva), merges the gross into the subtle (taijasa), merges into the subtle (prajna) and so on.

[455] With an exit, since one has to be born again.

[456] Five organs of perception (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin), five organs of action (hands, legs, stomach, genital organs, organ of excretion), five gross elements and five tanmatras (subtle elements). In addition, the mind, Prakriti, Purusha, Mahat and ahamkara.

[457] This is the reference to the swan (*hamsa*), since a swan is believed to possess the ability to distinguish between milk and water.

[458] Of creation.

[459] Brahma.

[460] A night that is over.

[461] To sages, gods and ancestors. Studying for the first and oblations for the last two.

[462] Hari's.

[463] You have separated me from my sons twice.

[464] To curse Daksha back.

[465] Kashyapa.

[466] Tarkshya is one of Kashyapa's names. Therefore, 13+4=17 daughters were married to Kashyapa.

[467] The divinities of the clouds.

[468] The divinities of the forts.

[469] The mother is Sankalpaa and the son is Sankalpa.

[470] The divinities of the cities, Dharani means the earth.

[471] Another of Agni's wives.

[472] There is a contradiction with what has been said a little earlier.

[473] The eleven Rudras.

[474] Four out of seventeen.

[475] Meaning Vinata's.

[476] The same as Aruna.

[477] Since he loved Rohini more, Soma was cursed by Daksha.

[478] Kashyapa's wives.

[479] The first ten of Kashyapa's wives.

[480] Evil spirits.

[481] Danu's son.

[482] Kashyapa.

[483] Respectively descended from Puloma and Kalaka.

[484] The grandfather is Arjuna. These are known as the *nivatakavacha*s. Indra asked Arjuna to destroy them as he couldn't kill them himself.
[485] The twelve Adityas.
[486] The two Ashvins.
[487] Shiva.
[488] The sons of Diti.
[489] The gods accepted Vishvarupa as a priest.
[490] Brihaspati.
[491] Puloma's daughter, Shachi, Indra's consort.
[492] Literally, the lord of speech, Brihaspati.
[493] Shukracharya, the preceptor of the demons, also known as Kavya.
[494] Vishvarupa had done various things for the demons, since he had been on their side.
[495] The word used is *tata*. It means son, but is used to address anyone who is junior.
[496] Indra.
[497] There is a difference between two types of guests—*atithi* and *abhyagata*. *Tithi* is a lunar day and there are guests who are invited and arrive on specific tithis, because these are festive occasions. These are expected and invited guests, visitors. Atithi means *a-tithi* and is therefore not any guest, but a guest who arrives uninvited and is unexpected.
[498] The act of accepting a priesthood.
[499] Those performed by priests.
[500] The mantra known as Narayana-kavacha (armour).
[501] This is known as *anga-nyasa*, the mental appropriation (*nyasa*) of different limbs of the body (*anga*) to different divinities. The two mantras are *Oum namo Narayanaya* (with eight aksharas) and *Oum namo bhagavate Vasudevaya* (with twelve aksharas).
[502] Thus identified with the eight aksharas.
[503] The apportioning of the twelve aksharas to different parts of the hands, *kara* means hand.
[504] It starts with the index finger of the right hand and ends with the index finger of the left hand, accounting for eight aksharas. The last four aksharas are for the joints of the thumbs.
[505] This is the mantra *Oum Vishnave namah*, with six aksharas.
[506] Phat is the sound made by snapping the middle finger and thumb at the end, meant to ward off evil spirits.

[507] Sovereignty, dharma, glory, prosperity, knowledge and detachment.
[508] This is the Narayana-kavacha.
[509] The siddhis.
[510] The asura women had miscarriages.
[511] In the varaha form.
[512] Boar.
[513] Parashurama.
[514] Rama.
[515] Narada. Interpretations list out thirty-two different kinds of transgressions, but there is no need to list those.
[516] Balarama, in the form of Shesha. Krodhavashas are angry and virulent serpents.
[517] Day and night are divided into eight yamas, each yama is a period of three hours.
[518] The second *yama*, after dawn.
[519] Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.
[520] Kushmandas are evil spirits, vainayakas/*vinayaka*s are evil leaders who cause obstacles, and grahas are evil imps that especially prey on children.
[521] Pramathas are beings that torment, matrikas pretend to be mothers and prey on infants, evil brahmanas means brahmanas who have become rakshasas.
[522] Vishvarupa is also known as Trishira, because of his three heads. His father was Tvashta and his mother was Rochana (sometimes also referred to as Rupavati).
[523] That the asuras would become powerful.
[524] A kapinjala is the Jacobin cuckoo (or francoline partridge), a kalavinka is the sparrow (or Indian cuckoo) and a tittiri is a partridge.
[525] Hari is also one of Indra's names.
[526] By rain.
[527] Even at the time of pregnancy.
[528] *Vritra* means darkness. He enveloped the worlds with his darkness.
[529] The text uses both astra and shastra. These are both weapons and the words are often used synonymously. However, an astra is a weapon that is hurled or released, while a shastra is held in the hand.
[530] A dog may be able to swim. But one cannot cross an ocean by hanging on to a dog's tail.
[531] This is a reference to the matsya (fish) avatara.

[532] The three gunas or the three worlds.
[533] This is a difficult shloka and has many interpretations. The way we have translated it, questions are being raised about how independent one's own karma is, as opposed to be being determined by a superior force. The subsequent shlokas are also difficult to translate.
[534] After everything else has been eliminated.
[535] Interpreted as someone who maintains the three worlds.
[536] Such as half-man–half-lion.
[537] That is, shastras.
[538] Also known as Dadhicha or Dadhichi.
[539] Literally, the head (*shira*) of a horse (*ashva*). Dadhyan had imparted this knowledge to the two Ashvins when he had temporarily assumed the head of a horse.
[540] The Narayana-kavacha.
[541] Dadhyan.
[542] It is a hardship that people do not follow this principle.
[543] Indra.
[544] A shataghni was a weapon that could kill one hundred at the same time and could have been a giant catapult. A bhushundi was a catapult, probably smaller in size.
[545] Vritra's.
[546] Indra's.
[547] Vritra.
[548] Trishira.
[549] This is similar to Bhagavad Gita 18.78.
[550] Dharma, artha and kama.
[551] Vishnu.
[552] Indra.
[553] Of victory and defeat.
[554] Mountains were once believed to possess wings.
[555] The Himalayas.
[556] It took one year for the head to be brought down.
[557] It was the killing of a brahmana.
[558] A pulkasa (equivalently *pukkasa*) is the son of a *nishada* father and a shudra mother.
[559] Vrishakapi is a name for others too. But in this context, it is one of Indra's names.

[560] Heaven.
[561] Nahusha desired Shachi, Indra's wife. He also ill-treated brahmanas like Agastya. Therefore, he was condemned that he would be born as a serpent. The story is told in the Mahabharata.
[562] Indra.
[563] Since this was the north-eastern direction, the divinity is Rudra.
[564] Therefore, he did not remember Krishna because he was scared. That is yet another apparent contradiction.
[565] Chitraketu.
[566] Chitraketu.
[567] For a man, the seven constituents are the five subtle elements, Mahat and ahamkara. For a king, the seven objects are ministers, allies, the treasury, territory, forts, the army and the kingship.
[568] Trade guilds.
[569] An oblation of rice, barley and pulses, cooked in butter and milk.
[570] After what had been offered to Tvashta.
[571] She is addressing her son now.
[572] Yama.
[573] The bodies of the mother and the father.
[574] The atman.
[575] Sanatkumara.
[576] Parashurama.
[577] An Upanishad that is in the form of a mantra. This will be stated a little later.
[578] Shiva.
[579] Not the dead body, but the spirit of the dead prince, the jivatman.
[580] One can deduce this is a reference to Angiras, who had implicitly suggested that none of the other wives would have children.
[581] Angiras and Narada.
[582] Another name for the Yamuna.
[583] Angiras and Narada.
[584] The mantra.
[585] Of material existence. That is, he is above them.
[586] When they are destroyed. In that way, everything merges into the brahman.
[587] Chitraketu.
[588] Required to form words.

[589] Interpreted as earth, water, fire, air, space, ahamkara and Mahat.
[590] Two paramanus constitute one anu.
[591] The infinite one.
[592] Which are therefore infertile and do not yield fruits.
[593] A wicked person, a chandala.
[594] Narada.
[595] Contrary to expectation, along the path of pravritti.
[596] The path of nivritti.
[597] The three states of being awake, asleep and in deep sleep.
[598] A kulachala is a great mountain and the Indra among kulachalas is Sumeru.
[599] Chitraketu.
[600] Brahma.
[601] Sanaka, Sananda, Sanatana and Sanatkumara.
[602] Hara, Shiva.
[603] Worst among kshatriyas, one who is a kshatriya only in name.
[604] Parvati.
[605] Girisha means someone who resides in a mountain. Hence, Shiva and Parvati.
[606] Rudra's consort, Parvati.
[607] Sanatkumara.
[608] Chitraketu.
[609] Chitraketu.
[610] Savita is the fifth of Aditi's sons. Savitri is the deity of the *savitri mantra*. Vyahriti means the words bhuh, bhuvah and svah, uttered after Oum and here, Vyahriti means the deity of vyahitri. *Trayi* is the deity of the three Vedas, Rig Veda, Sama Veda and Yajur Veda. Agnihotra is the deity when oblations are offered into the fire, Pashu is the deity when animals are sacrificed and Soma is the deity of soma sacrifices. Chaturmasya is a sacrifice performed once every four months, at the beginning of summer, the rainy season and winter. Here, Chaturmasya is the deity for such sacrifices. There are five great sacrifices (*mahamakha*s) and each has a deity. Therefore, Prishni had nine sons. The five great sacrifices are *brahma-yajna* (sacrificing to the sages), *pitri-yajna* (offering oblations to ancestors), *deva-yajna* (offering oblations to gods), *nri-yajna* (offering food and shelter to humans/guests) and *bhuta-yajna* (offering food and shelter to non-human species).

[611] Sinivali is the deity (and the day) for the day preceding the night of the new moon, Kuhu is the deity (and the day) for the night of the new moon, Raka is the deity (and the day) for the night of the full moon and Anumati is the deity (and the day) for the fourteenth night of shukla paksha. Sayam is the deity for evening, Prata is the deity for morning, Darsha is the deity for the night of the new moon and Purnamasa is the deity for the night of the full moon.

[612] Samantara is another name for Vidhatri. There are five fire gods known as Purishyas.

[613] Because Bhrigu had earlier been born as one of Brahma's sons, through Brahma's mental powers.

[614] *Valmika* is an anthill or termite hill. Valmiki was actually Varuna's son. However, since he was covered in an anthill or termite hill, he seemed to have been born from this.

[615] Urvashi is an apsara. When they saw Urvashi, Mitra and Varuna deposited their semen in a pot and Agastya and Vasishtha were born from this.

[616] In the form of vamana (dwarf). This will be described in the Eighth Skandha.

[617] Bali's character, in the Eighth Skandha.

[618] Shiva.

[619] Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu.

[620] Indra.

[621] Because Indra is Aditi's son.

[622] A dead body is known as worms, because if buried, it is eaten by worms. It is known as excrement because it can be eaten up by predatory beasts and birds. It is known as ashes, because it can also be burnt.

[623] A vow that yields a son.

[624] Indra.

[625] The name is derived from '*Ma rud*', 'Do not cry'.

[626] Indra.

[627] Shrinivasa means Shri's abode and is one of Vishnu's names.

[628] There were forty-nine Maruts.

[629] She had gone to sleep.

[630] The success is secondary, because that was not the intention behind the worship.

[631] November–December.

[632] These are objects offered to Vishnu. Arghya is a gift, padya is water for washing the feet, the other 'water' means water for rinsing the mouth, 'bath' means water for having a bath.
[633] *Oum namo bhagavate maha-purushaya maha-vibhuti-pataye svaha*.
[634] Shri.
[635] This is a sequel to the first round of worship.
[636] The mantra.
[637] On grounds of ill health, or the monthly cycle.
[638] October–November.
[639] This has been interpreted as the recommended modes for cooking food offered at sacrifices. However, paka-yajna also means a simple sacrifice undertaken at home and that seems to be a better meaning.

[640] Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa.
[641] Such as the asuras.
[642] And not in terms of deceptive differences.
[643] Narada.
[644] Ajatashatru is Yudhishthira and the reference is to Yudhishthira's royal sacrifice.
[645] At the royal sacrifice, when Krishna killed Shishupala, the lord of Chedi, Shishupala's atman merged into Krishna's body.
[646] King Vena, an evil king, was killed by the brahmanas. King Prithu was Vena's son.
[647] Damaghosha was Shishupala's father.
[648] Dantavakra was Shishupala's cousin. He wasn't present at the royal sacrifice and was killed by Krishna later. Therefore, there is an inconsistency in the way this is stated.
[649] This is a reference to predatory wasps, which lay an egg on a prey (as food for the offspring) and then seal the nest.
[650] The worm thinks about the wasp and assumes the form of the wasp. Similarly, one is drawn close to Vishnu.
[651] Wives of cowherds (gopas).
[652] The Pandavas.
[653] Shishupala was the son of Shrutashrava, Kunti's sister. Dantavakra was the son of Shrutadeva, also Kunti's sister.
[654] Marichi and the other sages.
[655] Jaya and Vijaya.
[656] Vishnu.
[657] The sages.
[658] The half-man–half-lion incarnation.
[659] Hiranyakashipu.
[660] Vishnu.
[661] Hiranyakashipu.
[662] One with two heads.
[663] One with one hundred arms.
[664] One with the head of a horse.
[665] A reference to the gods.
[666] A boar.
[667] This is specifically addressed to Diti.
[668] Their reflection in the water.

[669] Though the plural is used, Yama means himself, in the form of a boy.
[670] Such as riches lost along the way, which may be regained. The text doesn't indicate whether something animate or inanimate is meant. But the purport is identical.
[671] Sparrow or shrike.
[672] This is Hiranyakashipu's resolution, as reported by the gods. Parameshthi is Brahma.
[673] The implicit suggestion is that Brahma's position is also temporary.
[674] Dharma leading to bad consequences, adharma leading to good consequences, demons residing in heaven, gods residing in the nether regions and so on.
[675] This causes problems of interpretations that are not easily solvable. Hiranyakashipu seems to think that positions occupied by devotees of Vishnu (Vaishnavas) and Vishnu's world are destroyed at the end of a kalpa. He also seems to think that Brahma's position is not destroyed at the end of a kalpa and therefore, he would prefer that. Irrespective of whether this is true or not, this contradicts what he has himself stated earlier.
[676] *Agnishtoma*, *atyagnishtoma*, *ukthya*, *shodashi*, *vajapeya*, *atiratra* and *aptoryama*.
[677] There were four classes of priests, though the classification varied over time. The *hotri* is the chief priest and is accomplished in the Rig Veda. The adhvaryu is the assistant priest and is accomplished in the Yajur Veda, though later, the *udgatri* came to be identified with the Sama Veda. In addition, there was the brahmana or *purohita*.
[678] There are units for measuring time and lava is one of these. The details have been given in the Third Skandha.
[679] Kala.
[680] There is an interpretation we have glossed over. The text uses the words *chit* and *achit*. Chit is interpreted as true knowledge that is internal, while achit is external and represents the power of maya.
[681] Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.
[682] The rivers.
[683] Flowers and fruits.
[684] Sanaka, Sananda, Sanatana and Sanatkumara.
[685] Of material objects.
[686] Hari.
[687] Hari.

[688] Shukracharya.
[689] Of identification with the body.
[690] Hari.
[691] As in danda, the other three being sama, dana and bheda.
[692] Of the sandalwood trees.
[693] Dharma, artha and kama.
[694] The four principles are interpreted as sama, dana, danda and bheda. However, since dharma, artha and kama have just been mentioned, it seems to us that the four principles should be interpreted as dharma, artha, kama and moksha.
[695] In the singular, so probably addressed to Shanda.
[696] One who is a brahmana only in name, worst among brahmanas.
[697] A reference to birth and death in the cycle of samsara.
[698] Demons.
[699] Shunahshepa was the son of the sage Ajigarta and was sold by his father to King Harishchandra, for a sacrifice. He was subsequently saved by the sage Vishvamitra and never forgave his father.
[700] Shukracharya.
[701] To play.
[702] Material objects and wealth.
[703] Intercourse and food.
[704] Relating to adhidaivika (destiny), adhibhoutika (nature) and adhyatmika (one's own nature).
[705] This can be interpreted as, does not know his atman.
[706] Artha and kama.
[707] Hiranyakashipu.
[708] Of killing the infant.
[709] Birth, existence, growth, maturity, decay and death.
[710] Eternal, without decay, pure, one, witness, refuge, no transformation, self-illuminating, cause, pervasive, without attachment and without being covered.
[711] The eight prakritis are the original Prakriti, Mahat, ahamkara and the five subtle elements. The three gunas are sattva, rajas and tamas. The sixteen transformations mean the five gross elements, five senses, five organs of action and the mind.
[712] This is a reference to the four states of consciousness—wakefulness (*jagrata*), dreaming (*svapna*), deep sleep (*sushupti*) and pure conscious-

ness (turiya). While this has been interpreted in many ways, to us, intelligence seems to mean the turiya stage.

[713] Narada.

[714] This is interpreted as offering everything obtained to the preceptor, but that isn't obvious. Everything obtained can also be offered to Krishna.

[715] The six vices, kama (desire), krodha (anger), lobha (avarice), moha (delusion), mada (pride) and matsarya (jealousy).

[716] The devotee.

[717] Taking them to be Krishna.

[718] The illustrious one's.

[719] After death, such as worms and predatory creatures.

[720] The atman, it embraces another body.

[721] The area around Vrindavana, but in general, any area where there are settlements of cowherds.

[722] Meaning Shanda.

[723] Hiranyakashipu's.

[724] The six vices, kama (desire), krodha (anger), lobha (avarice), moha (delusion), mada (pride) and matsarya (jealousy).

[725] Hiranyakashipu.

[726] Garuda.

[727] The wielder (*dhara*) of the club (*gada*), Hari.

[728] By Hiranyakashipu.

[729] Nri-Hari, that is, Nrisimha.

[730] At the sound of the laughter, Hiranyakashipu closed his eyes in terror.

[731] The austerities, stolen by Hiranyakashipu.

[732] Vidya means knowledge. Thus vidyadhara, one who holds knowledge.

[733] Narahari, Nara-Hari, is the same as Nri-Hari. Panchatva simply means death, that is, when the body is separated into the five elements. But there is another meaning too. A living being has four states—waking, dreaming, sleeping and turiya. Turiya is the fourth state, when one perceives union between the human soul atman and the brahman. Panchatva is the fifth state, beyond turiya. Twenty-four principles of samkhya are Prakriti, Mahat, ahamkara, the five gross elements, the five subtle elements, five organs of sense, five organs of action and the mind. Thus, Purusha is the twenty-fifth.

[734] Vaitalikas are bards and panegyrists, but is probably being used here to also mean the vetalas.

[735] The story of the leader of a herd of elephants will be told in the Eighth Skandha.
[736] Literally, a svapacha is someone who eats dogs or cooks for dogs. In most instances, it is used as a synonym for a chandala.
[737] The twelve qualities are virtue, sattva, self-control, austerities, lack of jealousy, modesty, fortitude, tolerance, performance of sacrifices, charity, courage and studying.
[738] Because the effects are only temporary.
[739] This shloka has many complicated interpretations. So do the immediately succeeding ones.
[740] The five senses, the five organs of action, the five subtle elements and the mind.
[741] Bhava is Shiva and Rama is Lakshmi.
[742] We have taken the rishi to mean Narada, but it might also mean Sanaka, Sananda, Sanatana or Sanatkumara.
[743] The universe (the effect) is no different from you (the cause). The tree (the effect) is no different from the seed (the cause). The earth (the effect) is no different from its subtle element (the cause).
[744] The universe.
[745] That is, Shesha.
[746] Brahma.
[747] Because you only appear in three yugas.
[748] The river Vaitarani flows in the nether regions and must be crossed before entering Yama's world.
[749] Meaning, 'Oum! O illustrious one! I bow down before you. O great-souled being! O Hari! O one with this wonderful lion as your form! O brahman! O paramatman!'
[750] There is an issue of interpretation. Hiranyakashipu was third in descent, from Brahma. Therefore, there aren't twenty-one generations in his ancestral lineage. Thus, twenty-one generations are interpreted as the ancestors in twenty-one of Prahlada's former lives.
[751] Brahma.
[752] Shukracharya.
[753] Brahma.
[754] Hari, or Rama.
[755] Dantavakra, Dantavakra was the king of Karusha.
[756] That is, they were killed in your presence.

[757] As Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu.
[758] Shiva.
[759] Maya.
[760] Vishnu.
[761] There are thirty muhurtas in a span of twnty-four hours, fifteen during the day and fifteen during the night. Some muhurtas are auspicious, others are not, and Abhijit muhurta is the most auspicious of the fifteen muhurtas during the day. Literally, Abhijit is a muhurta that brings victory. Today, Abhijit muhurta, depending on the place, will be around noon.
[762] Prahlada.
[763] Narada.
[764] As Nara, Daksha's daughter being Murti.
[765] There is no numbering in the text. We have numbered these for the sake of convenience.
[766] This is service to Hari, the preceding one was service to creatures.
[767] A dvija is a person born twice, the second birth usually referring to the upanayana ceremony. There are thirteen samskaras or sacraments. The list varies a bit. But one list is vivaha (marriage), garbhalambhana (conception), pumsavana (engendering a male child), simantonnayana (parting the hair, performed in the fourth month of pregnancy), jatakarma (birth rites), namakarana (naming), chudakarma (tonsure), annaprashana (first solid food), keshanta (first shaving of the head), upanayana (sacred thread), vidyarambha (commencement of studies), samavartana (graduation) and antyeshti (funeral rites). Thus, a dvija is not necessarily a brahmana.
[768] Studying, teaching, sacrificing, officiating at sacrifices, receiving gifts and donating.
[769] The other three varnas must not receive donations.
[770] The other three varnas.
[771] A king still can't accept gifts.
[772] That is, the husband has not committed a grave sin.
[773] The father and the mother belong to different varnas.
[774] Antyajas are those who belong to lower classes, such as chandalas. They live just outside habitations and have their own hereditary means of subsistence.
[775] The varna of the signs, not the varna of birth.
[776] Interpreted as the gayatri mantra.

[777] The girdle is made out of *munja* grass.
[778] Of brahmacharya.
[779] This is a slight variation of Bhagavad Gita 2.60.
[780] Such as between a man and a woman.
[781] A householder may also take the vow of brahmacharya.
[782] Vedanga means a branch of the Vedas and these are six kinds of learning that are essential to understand the Vedas—*shiksha* (phonetics), kalpa (rituals), *vyakarana* (grammar), *nirukta* (etymology), chhanda (metre) and *jyotisha* (astronomy). The Vedas have four parts—*Samhita*, *Brahmana*, *Aranyaka* and *Upanishad*. The *Samhita* and *Brahmana* sections are known as *karma kanda*, they prescribe rites and rituals. The *Aranyaka* and *Upanishad* sections are known as *jnana kanda*, they are the paths of knowledge.
[783] The dakshina after the completion of studies.
[784] In the vanaprastha stage.
[785] Kept as a store.
[786] He becomes a sannyasi.
[787] He will merge his body (the aggregate) into the constituent five elements (the causes).
[788] Solid components like flesh, muscles and bones.
[789] That is, Varuna.
[790] Brahma.
[791] The text uses 'the unmanifest' for Prakriti.
[792] The paramatman.
[793] That is, he gives up his life.
[794] Of becoming a sannyasi.
[795] Like a *kamandalu* or water pot.
[796] Any straitjacketed rules.
[797] The sage's name wasn't Ajagara. From the third chapter of the First Skandha, we can deduce that this was Dattatreya. *Ajagara* (python) describes the sage's conduct. A python lies down on the ground, waiting for food to come, and does not make any efforts.
[798] Sahyadri.
[799] Like the senses and the mind, ego and intelligence.
[800] Relating to adhidaivika (destiny), adhibhoutika (nature) and adhyatmika (one's own nature).
[801] Just as the bee is killed when the honey is collected.

[802] I am naked.
[803] Between categories and people.
[804] Hence, I have explained it to you.
[805] Interpreted as—after performing the tasks of a householder.
[806] Rain descends from heaven, resulting in crops that yield wealth. Ores and minerals also produce wealth and originate in the earth. The firmament is a reference to wealth that results from chance.
[807] Dharma, artha and kama.
[808] One must be careful in not misinterpreting this and taking it out of context, the idea being that one reduces attachment to the wife.
[809] As mentioned earlier, depending on how the body is disposed of after death.
[810] This is a reference to the five sacrifices recommended for householders. The five great sacrifices are brahma-yajna (sacrificing to the sages), pitri-yajna (offering oblations to ancestors), deva-yajna (offering oblations to gods), nri-yajna (offering food and shelter to humans/guests) and bhuta-yajna (offering food and shelter to non-human species).
[811] Proshthapada is a nakshatra. More accurately, it is a collective name for two nakshatras, Purva Bhadrapada and Uttara Bhadrapada. This therefore means the month of Bhadra (August–September) and the rite takes place on the day of Mahalaya.
[812] The two famous *sankranti*s.
[813] Vyatipata is an inauspicious period that lasts for almost twenty-four hours during every lunar month.
[814] This is not the third lunar day in any shukla paksha, but specifically that in the month of Vaishakha, known as *akshaya tritiya*.
[815] During shukla paksha, known as *akshaya navami*.
[816] The cold season is *hemanta*, between autumn and winter. Winter proper is *shishira*. Hemanta is the months of Margashirsha (also known as Agrahayana) and Pousha. Margashirsha is roughly mid-November to mid-December, while Pousha is mid-December to mid-January. Shishira is the months of Magha (mid-January to mid-February) and Phalguna (mid-February to mid-March). Ashtaka is the eighth lunar day, but during krishna paksha.
[817] Such as Krittika in the ascendant in the month of Kartika.
[818] Uttara Phalguni, Uttara Bhadrapada and Uttarashadha.
[819] The three Uttara nakshatras.

[820] Donations to men and creatures in the name of ancestors and gods.
[821] The worthy recipient.
[822] Gaya.
[823] Where the river Phalgu flows.
[824] Setubandha, where Rama constructed the bridge, Rameshvara.
[825] Dvaraka.
[826] Mathura.
[827] Badarikashrama.
[828] Where the river Alakananda flows.
[829] Chitrakuta.
[830] At Yudhishthira's royal sacrifice.
[831] Implying this wasn't necessary in satya yuga.
[832] That is, they internalize the symbolism of sacrifices and give up the external rituals.
[833] Such as animals.
[834] Alternatively, recommended for a different varna.
[835] Thus, chhala is apparent, but not real conformity with dharma. Upadharma is the same as upama.
[836] Such as a dog.
[837] Such as revenge.
[838] It is useless, because the elephant immediately becomes dirty again.
[839] Krishna.
[840] The six vices, kama (desire), krodha (anger), lobha (avarice), moha (delusion), mada (pride) and matsarya (jealousy). Alternatively, the five senses and the mind.
[841] Prana draws breath into the body, apana exhales it. *Vyana* distributes it through the body and *samana* assimilates it. *Udana* gives rise to sound. *Ayama* means control or restraint, so pranayama is control of the breath of life. Pranayama has three components—puraka, rechaka and kumbhaka. Puraka is when the inhaled apana air fills up the exhaled prana air and temporarily stops its exit. Rechaka is when the exhaled prana air stops the entry of the inhaled apana air. Kumbhaka is when prana and apana are both controlled and the air is restrained inside the body.
[842] One in vanaprastha.
[843] One in sannyasa.
[844] Other than prana, apana, vyana, samana and udana, the other five components of the breath of life are *naga, kurma, krikala, devadatta* and

dhananjaya. These five are sub-breaths of life, so to speak, and are respectively burping, blinking, sneezing, yawning and opening/closing of the valves in the hearts.

[845] Give up the body.

[846] Both ishta and purta are types of sacrifices and are instances of pravritti karma. Distribution of things required to sustain life means the distribution of food and drink. Agnihotra is a sacrifice where oblations are offered to the fire (every day), darsha is performed on the day of the new moon, purnamasa (or *paurnimasya*) is performed on the day of the full moon, chaturmasya is performed at the beginning of every four-month period, pashu involves the sacrifice of animals, suta is a soma sacrifice, huta is the symbolic offering of oblations to Vishvadevas before taking meals and prahuta is the symbolic offering of oblations to household divinities, humans and other creatures before taking meals.

[847] These shlokas are difficult to understand and have been interpreted in different ways. One possible interpretation is the following. Pitri yana is the path of the ancestors. For a person who performs such sacrifices, the linga sharira, after death, follows the path of the ancestors, escorted by divinities associated with smoke, night, krishna paksha, dakshinayana and soma. Having gone to Yama's world, it is born again, moving up the food chain.

[848] The alphabet.

[849] Omkara is the concise form of the sound 'Oum', Bindu is the centre of the forehead, Nada is the vibration of the sound and Prana is the breath of life.

[850] Following the earlier progression, this is the path of deva yana, the path of the gods. Vishva is when the jivatman is identified with gross elements, taijasa is identification with subtle elements and prajna is when the difference between cause and effect ceases.

[851] The body.

[852] These shlokas are also difficult to understand and have been interpreted in different ways.

[853] They are unreal.

[854] Striving for the turiya state.

[855] Monism, non-duality.

[856] Krishna.

[857] The Prajapatis.

[858] Intoxicated, Narada sung inappropriate songs and was cursed by the Prajapatis.
[859] Brahma.

[860] Parikshit.
[861] Svayambhuva Manu's.
[862] Shri-Shuka.
[863] Svayambhuva Manu's daughters were Akuti and Devahuti and Kapila was Devahuti's son. Yajna, or Yajnapati or Yajnamurti, was Akuti's son.
[864] Svayambhuva Manu.
[865] The shlokas in Manu's saying occur in different Upanishads, in different forms and some are verbatim reproductions.
[866] Suparna literally means one with excellent feathers. In Upanishads like *Mundaka Upanishad* (3.1.1) and *Shvetashvatara Upanishad* (4.6), Suparna is a metaphor for the paramatman, a companion and well-wisher of the jivatman.
[867] Creation, preservation and destruction.
[868] Preservation and destruction.
[869] Without being driven by the fruits.
[870] The Manus, the gods, Indra and the saptarshis vary from one manvantara to another. This was the first manvantara, when Svayambhuva was the Manu. Vishnu's form as Yajna was Indra. The Yamas, Yajna's sons, were the gods.
[871] The names Tosha, Pratosha, Santosha, Bhadra, Shanti, Idaspati, Idhma, Kavi, Vibhu, Svahna, Sudeva and Rochana were given in Chapter 4(1).
[872] Tushitaa.
[873] Vishnu.
[874] All three are collective categories.
[875] Satyavratas were gods, probably the same category as Satyas.
[876] Satyasena.
[877] Lord of heaven, Indra.
[878] Act of giving up one's life by fasting to death.
[879] *Koyashti* is lapwing and *datyuha* is gallinule.
[880] Different reeds, flowers and trees.
[881] Sharabha has many meanings—young elephant, camel. It is also a mythical animal with eight legs, believed to be stronger than a lion.
[882] With a tail like that of a cow, langur. Also known as *golangula*.
[883] The details of this earlier birth will follow later.
[884] The universe is manifest during creation and not manifest during destruction.

[885] This can be interpreted as nivritti, or equivalently, transcending the cycle of karma.
[886] In different avataras.
[887] At the time of creation.
[888] A divine and spiritual one, not a physical one.
[889] What is left after eliminating others through progressive '*neti*', 'not this'.
[890] Through ignorance.
[891] Sattva, rajas and tamas.
[892] To save him, since he had not prayed to any of these gods.
[893] Once, Huhu was bathing in a lake, with his wives. The sage Devala arrived and also started to bathe there. At this, Huhu tugged Devala by the leg. Devala cursed Huhu that he would become a crocodile and would only be freed by Hari, when he seized an elephant by the leg.
[894] This kulachala is taken to be Malaya.
[895] Agastya.
[896] Airavata, Indra's mount.
[897] Using the prayers you used. This is left implicit, but can be deduced.
[898] That is, these were three of the saptarshis.
[899] Lakshmi.
[900] The father was Chakshusha and the son was Chaakshusha.
[901] Durvasa presented a garland to Indra. Showing disrespect, Indra carelessly flung the garland on his elephant's (Airavata's) head. It fell down on the ground from the elephant's head and Airavata trampled it. Therefore, Durvasa cursed Indra.
[902] Interpreted as the shadow of ignorance and the sunshine of knowledge. He is not affected by either. Alternatively, he provides the shade against the heat of ignorance.
[903] The five senses of perception, the five organs of action and the five kinds of breath of life.
[904] Sattva, rajas and tamas.
[905] The eight fellies are interpreted either as the eight powers of the illustrious one, or as the five gross elements, mind, intelligence and ego.
[906] Of pure sattva.
[907] Rajas and tamas.
[908] Meaning Soma, the moon god. To make the meaning clear, we have taken some liberties in this shloka and the ones that immediately follow.
[909] Agni exists as a subterranean fire and as a digestive fire.

[910] Because all of it is maya.
[911] Which moves everywhere, but is not attached to anything.
[912] Shiva.
[913] Or a blue gem or blue sapphire.
[914] Brahma.
[915] In different incarnations.
[916] A pot is created from the earth, the earth exists in the pot and when the pot is destroyed, it returns to earth.
[917] Not possessing an existence independent of the fire.
[918] A snake and a mouse were caught and trapped in a basket. If the snake ate the mouse, it would continue to remain trapped. Therefore, it had an alliance with the mouse and the mouse gnawed a hole out of the basket. When both were free, the snake ate the mouse.
[919] If the demons demand those objects.
[920] Bali.
[921] That is, he suffused the asuras with rajas, the gods with sattva and Vasuki with tamas.
[922] Kind of pine.
[923] Timingila is a fish that devours whales (*timi*).
[924] Kailasa.
[925] Oum—O, U and M.
[926] Varuna.
[927] The seven sheaths of the body are interpreted as earth, water, fire, air, space, ahamkara and Mahat. The seven Vedic metres are Ushnik, Gayatri, Trishtubh, Anushtubh, Jagati, Pankti and Brihati.
[928] The five Upanishads mean the five mantras known as *tatpurusha, aghora, sadyojata, vamadeva* and *ishana*, being compared to Shiva's five faces. Statement of these mantras will get into too much of detail, as will an explanation of how thirty-eight mantras are derived from these five.
[929] Shiva burnt down Kama, the god of love, and destroyed Tripura and Daksha's sacrifice. Though the past tense is used, deadly poison means halahala, which is about to be destroyed.
[930] Known as kalakuta, in addition to halahala.
[931] Hari's.
[932] Midusha is one of Shiva's names.
[933] Bhavani.
[934] Meaning Surabhi, the cow which yields all the objects of desire.

[935] Kailasa.
[936] Diggajas are elephants in charge of the directions. The number is sometimes given as four and sometimes as eight. The names are not always uniform. In addition to the eight male elephants, eight female elephants are also sometimes mentioned as companions.
[937] Soudamani can be translated in different ways, a cloud, a mountain, a city.
[938] Milk, curds, clarified butter, dung and urine.
[939] Brahma.
[940] Lakshmi thinking to herself. In interpretations, specific examples are given of each rejected type.
[941] They do not want a consort.
[942] Good conduct and lifespan.
[943] The gandharvas.
[944] The goddess of liquor.
[945] The amrita.
[946] Wanton or unchaste woman.
[947] Loose woman.
[948] This form of Vishnu is known as Mohini. Mohini instructed them about these preliminaries.
[949] Cows were fed.
[950] Gods and asuras.
[951] The gods were seated further away. Mohini first went to the asuras.
[952] The word used is soma, meaning amrita.
[953] Brahma.
[954] Duality.
[955] *Bhasa*.
[956] Gavaya is a kind of ox, aruna probably means an eagle.
[957] Indra.
[958] Indra.
[959] Bali.
[960] The fire of universal destruction.
[961] Garuda.
[962] Bali.
[963] The subjects, not just the asuras, did not want Bali to be killed.
[964] Mountains were believed to have once possessed wings.
[965] Jambha honoured Matali and struck him.

[966] Indra's.
[967] Indra.
[968] Indra's name.
[969] Tvashta.
[970] The asuras.
[971] Bringing back to life.
[972] The one with the bull on his banner, Shiva.
[973] This world and the next.
[974] Sometimes, sixteen powers are enumerated. The nine are *vimala* (purity), *utkarshani* (eminence), jnana (knowledge), *kriya* (accomplishment), yoga (communion), prahvi (modesty), *satya* (truthfulness), *ishana* (sovereignty) and *anugraha* (mercy).
[975] The one who lives for two parardhas, Brahma.
[976] Rajas and tamas predominate in them.
[977] The weight of the necklaces, the breasts and the hips.
[978] They were red.
[979] Vishnu's.
[980] Shiva.
[981] Manvantara.
[982] One is Nabhaga, the other is Naabhaaga.
[983] Chapter 6 (6).
[984] Parashurama.
[985] Saptarshis.
[986] Indra.
[987] The Indra is Vaidhriti and Vaidhritaa is Aryaka's wife.
[988] Saptarshis.
[989] Bali.
[990] Shukracharya and others.
[991] Prahlada.
[992] The fire.
[993] The Ganga that flows in heaven.
[994] *Shyama*, therefore, alternatively, young.
[995] Apsaras.
[996] Brihaspati.
[997] Atithis.
[998] Dharma, artha and kama.
[999] Brahma.

[1000] February–March.
[1001] A flow of water in a river.
[1002] This is addressed to the earth.
[1003] Interpreted as an image.
[1004] These have diverse interpretations. Here are examples. The two heads are *prayaniya* (the initial rites of the sacrifice) and *upaniya* (the concluding rites of the sacrifice). The three feet are the three *savanna*s, rites associated with extracting soma juice in the morning, midday and evening. The four horns are the four Vedas. The seven arms are the seven metres. The three kinds of knowledge are about the past, the present and the future.
[1005] *Oum namo bhagavate Vasudevaya*.
[1006] A fine rice.
[1007] The one with the twelve aksharas.
[1008] A dish made out sweetened milk and rice.
[1009] Vishnu.
[1010] Pratipada means the first quarter from the start, so this is the first quarter of shukla paksha. This thus means the beginning of shukla paksha.
[1011] Milk, curd, ghee, sugar and honey.
[1012] All sacrifices. That is, it is as good as performing all the sacrifices.
[1013] Though not stated, there was a lotus in the fourth hand.
[1014] A fire results from the friction of two pieces of wood.
[1015] Brahma.
[1016] Prishni was a queen who was reborn as Devaki. As Devaki, she was Krishna's mother.
[1017] Meaning makara.
[1018] That is, the gods.
[1019] The day is known as *shravana-dvadashi*, the term used in the text. Shravana-dvadashi occurs in the month of Bhadrapada. Shravana refers to the nakshatra and not to the month of Shravana.
[1020] Victory.
[1021] Kashyapa.
[1022] Made out of munja grass.
[1023] Brahma.
[1024] This is naturally construed as a string of *rudraksha* beads.
[1025] Kubera.
[1026] Bharuch in Gujarat.

[1027] Bali.
[1028] Prahlada.
[1029] Vishnu.
[1030] Vishnu being anxious in his mind has led to interpretations. He pretended to be anxious. He was anxious because he actually wanted to protect his devotee, Hiranyakashipu. Vishnu wasn't really anxious, but vamana told Bali this to instil confidence in him.
[1031] He must be dead.
[1032] Prithu.
[1033] The touching of water is required before any auspicious act.
[1034] The sense seems to be that Bali did not say 'Oum' before uttering his pledge.
[1035] These shlokas have many kinds of complicated interpretations. We have translated them in the simplest possible way. This seems to make sense, without the complications.
[1036] Shibi was a generous king. There is a famous story about Indra, in the form of a hawk, pursuing Agni, in the form of a dove, all this being done to test Shibi. Shibi saved the dove by offering his own flesh in return.
[1037] Meaning Bali.
[1038] The two words are *ritam* and *satyam*. Satyam is truth, while ritam can be interpreted in different ways, divine truth or divine law being one.
[1039] Brahma.
[1040] Makaras.
[1041] Koustubha.
[1042] There are actually fourteen worlds (lokas), seven above and seven below. The seven above are—*bhurloka, kharloka, svarloka,* maharloka, janarloka, taparloka and *satyaloka (brahmaloka)*.
[1043] Brahma's world.
[1044] *Ayurveda, Dhanurveda* and so on.
[1045] Science of logic.
[1046] History.
[1047] Shuchishrava is Vishnu's name.
[1048] Ganga.
[1049] To the form of a vamana.
[1050] For a sacrifice.
[1051] Shukracharya's.
[1052] Sama, dana, danda, bheda.

[1053] The text is such that it might also mean the day on which soma juice is drunk.
[1054] That is, asuras.
[1055] Prahlada.
[1056] Brahma.
[1057] Vishnu.
[1058] There is no contradiction. Brahma was about to speak, but allowed Vindhyavali to speak first.
[1059] Even Bali did, by assuming that he owned the three worlds.
[1060] Shiva.
[1061] This seems to refer to Prahlada and not to Bali.
[1062] Interpreted as the Manus.
[1063] This is taken to be a reference to Rig Veda 1.154.1.
[1064] *Shaphari*. The feminine is used, so it was a female fish.
[1065] Identified as a tributary of the Bhagai or Vaigai in Madurai.
[1066] Following the process, they progressively went through larger and larger bodies of water.
[1067] Vasuki.
[1068] An ignorant preceptor.

[1069] Shraddhaa, Shradhadeva's wife.
[1070] The hotri is the chief priest and is accomplished in the Rig Veda. The adhvaryu is the assistant priest and is accomplished in the Yajur Veda.
[1071] The hotri's transgression is left implicit. Since he was thinking of Shraddha's request, his concentration wavered. The sacrifice was being performed for sons. Instead, a daughter was born.
[1072] Vasishtha, grandfather's grandfather in the sense that Shuka was born from Vyasa, Vyasa from Parasara, Parashara from Shakti and Shakti from Vasishtha.
[1073] Ravi is another name for Vivasvat, the sun god.
[1074] A region famous for its horses.
[1075] Sudyumna, who had now become a woman.
[1076] Literally, the southern path. In course of time, this was the southern part of the trade route that led from Bihar, through Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, to the ports in Gujarat. We can also simply take this as the southern regions.
[1077] Identified as Jhusi, near Prayaga, though Pratishthana had been identified with other places too. Pururava was the son when Sudyumna was a woman. The sons born when Sudyumna was a man became kings over the southern regions.
[1078] That is, Shraddhadeva.
[1079] Literally, posture of a hero. A seated position used by ascetics.
[1080] The tiger.
[1081] Vasishtha.
[1082] The paramatman.
[1083] Literally, the northern road. The northern part of Jambudvipa.
[1084] *Chakravarti*, literally, a king whose wheel (chakra) travels everywhere on earth.
[1085] Kubera.
[1086] Kubera.
[1087] Trinabindu's.
[1088] Vishala's.
[1089] Those were the sage Chyavana's eyes. While he was meditating, a termite hill had formed around him. Chyavana was descended from Bhrigu's lineage.
[1090] Chyavana's.
[1091] The two Ashvins, their names are Nasatya and Dasra.

[1092] The text uses the word *punyajana*, which means yakshas.
[1093] The father was Nabhaga and the son was Naabhaaga.
[1094] In the text, these sentences have the subject/subjects missing. We have added them, so that the meaning is clear.
[1095] A sukta is a hymn. These are the two suktas to the Vishvadevas in Rig Veda 10.61 and 10.62.
[1096] Such as temples and shrines.
[1097] Hari.
[1098] This is subject to interpretations. Dhanva can be interpreted as a desert region, instead of a proper name. We have taken this to mean that the flow of the Sarasvati reversed direction there. Alternatively, the sacrifice could have faced the upward direction of the river, rather than the natural downward direction.
[1099] The forms of the others were similar to those of the gods. The gods do not blink.
[1100] Fasting on the twelfth lunar day. More correctly, the vow lasts from the night of the tenth day to the morning of the twelfth day. This is the period of fasting. However, having eaten on the morning of the twelfth day, one fasts again on the night of the twelfth day. Thus, one fasts for three nights, tenth, eleventh and twelfth.
[1101] Kalindi is Yamuna and Madhuvana is the area around Mathura.
[1102] The bathing of the image.
[1103] Such as vessels for milking.
[1104] That is, break the fast.
[1105] Durvasa.
[1106] Ambarisha had only half a muhurta left to break the fast and he had to wait for Durvasa to return.
[1107] A famous sage born from Vishnu's speech, known as Sarasvata. He is also identified as Vedavyasa.
[1108] Also interpreted as prosperity in this world and in the next.
[1109] Salokya is the ability to reside with the lord, *sarupya* is to be like the lord in form, *samipya* is proximity to the lord and *sayujya* is identification with the lord.
[1110] Ambarisha.
[1111] Dhumaketu.
[1112] The sense is that I can do nothing more to praise you other than bow down to you.

[1113] A reference to Ambarisha touching Durvasa's feet.
[1114] This may cause confusion. This refers to the earlier incident, when Durvasa had gone to have his ablutions.
[1115] That is, all this was due to his devotion to Hari.
[1116] Angiras had sons through Rathitara's wife. They were *kshetraja* sons, kshetra meaning the field or wife. They should have been kshatriyas, but were brahmanas.
[1117] Though ashtaka means eighth, this is performed on the seventh, eighth and ninth lunar days.
[1118] That is, meat obtained through hunting.
[1119] The preceptor, Vasishtha.
[1120] Ikshvaku got to know from Vasishtha.
[1121] The person who ate a hare (*shasha*).
[1122] To help the gods, Shashada's condition was that Indra should be his mount. Before Vishnu interceded, Indra had refused. Thus, he got the name Indravaha, the one borne by Indra. Since he was seated on the bull's hump (*kakuda*), he acquired the name of Kakutstha, the one located on the hump. Puranjaya means the conqueror of a city.
[1123] A sage.
[1124] Not to be confused with the earlier Yuvanashva.
[1125] The sages asked this question.
[1126] Literally, the terror of bandits. He was known as Mandhata, from '*mam dhata*', meaning, 'be suckled by me'.
[1127] Not to be confused with the earlier Ambarisha.
[1128] Svayamvara is a ceremony where the maiden herself (*svayam*) chooses her husband (*vara*) from assembled suitors.
[1129] Using his powers, he became young and handsome.
[1130] Soubhari.
[1131] Fifty wives, each wife had one hundred sons.
[1132] This can be interpreted in different ways, the fires of desire, or the fires a householder possesses.
[1133] Ambarisha, Youvanashva and Harita.
[1134] Mandhata's son.
[1135] Not to be confused with Mandhata, who also had a name of Trasadasyu.
[1136] Interpretations take this to mean that Satyavrata was cursed by his father. Since the word used is guru, it can also mean preceptor. In this case, the preceptor was Vasishtha. Satyavrata wanted to go to heaven in his

own physical body. When Vasishtha refused to help, Satyavrata enlisted the support of Shakti, Vasishtha's son, whereupon Vasishtha cursed him. This is the standard story. Of course, the Vasishtha curse has no mention of being a chandala. That occurs, if guru is taken to mean father. This story is in *Harivamsha*. When Satyavrata forcibly married a maiden who had already been married to someone else, his father cursed him that he would become a chandala/*shvapaka*.

[1137] Astronomically, Trishanku is identified as the Southern Cross.

[1138] This means Koushika, Vishvamitra. Through Vishvamitra's powers, Trishanku went to heaven in his own physical body. When the gods made him fall down from heaven, Vishvamitra again used his powers to make Trishanku hang on there, with his face downwards.

[1139] Vishvamitra adopted the form of a crane and Vasishtha that of a heron, they having cursed each other that they would become birds. The clash resulted from Vishvamitra's persecution of Harishchandra.

[1140] Varuna.

[1141] Infant teeth.

[1142] *Mahodara*, distended stomach.

[1143] Ajigarta was a brahmana from Bhrigu's lineage. He had three sons. He did not wish to part with his eldest son and his wife did not wish to part with his youngest son. Thus, the second son, the one in the middle, was chosen.

[1144] In Chapter 9(16).

[1145] Harishchandra.

[1146] As should be obvious, these shlokas have complicated metaphysical interpretations.

[1147] Ignorance.

[1148] The capital of the Anga kingdom, now Champanagar in Bhagalpur.

[1149] Died.

[1150] A sage.

[1151] He was named Sagara because he was born along with (*sa*) poison (*gara*).

[1152] Thus, the ocean is Saagara.

[1153] Ourva.

[1154] Sagara had two wives, Sumati and Keshini.

[1155] Between friend and foe, between one's own self and that of others.

[1156] In a former birth.

[1157] He brought the dead children back to life.
[1158] Kapila.
[1159] This is sometimes translated as Ahumitra. Since the name of Mitrasaha is given later, we have taken Ahumitra in the sense of someone who is referred to as Mitra.
[1160] Soudasa means Sudasa's son. Thus, Soudasa is the same as Ahumitra or Kalmashapada.
[1161] Soudasa wished to curse Vasishtha because Vasishtha had cursed an innocent person.
[1162] Kalmasha means speckled black and white. Therefore, Kalmashapada or blackened feet.
[1163] The word used is *didhishu*, meaning second husband. The lady had married a second time.
[1164] Literally, when you are about to discharge your semen.
[1165] Soudasa's name.
[1166] Vasishtha.
[1167] Resulting from a stone (*ashman*).
[1168] All kshatriyas were destroyed by Parashurama. At that time, women saved Mulaka from destruction. Narikavacha means someone whose armour consisted of women. When all the kshatriyas were destroyed, a new line of kshatriyas was born through Mulaka.
[1169] Not to be confused with Rama's father.
[1170] In the plural.
[1171] This should be taken as Sugriva, though Hanuman is also possible.
[1172] Lakshmana.
[1173] Demons.
[1174] Shiva.
[1175] Parashurama.
[1176] Meaning, three times seven, twenty-one.
[1177] Shurpanakha.
[1178] Of the deer.
[1179] Just as Rudra/Shiva killed Daksha.
[1180] Jatayu.
[1181] Originating in tamas.
[1182] Ravana was the sage Vishrava's son.
[1183] The word is *vitanka*. This means aviary or dovecote, as well as a lofty point or pinnacle. It is not obvious to us why most interpretations take

this in the sense of aviary. Given the context, pinnacle seems better.

[1184] Indrajit.

[1185] Hanuman.

[1186] Jambavat.

[1187] Indra's charioteer.

[1188] Ravana.

[1189] Kshurapras (*kshura*s) are arrows with sharp edges.

[1190] Ravana's wife.

[1191] Shimshapa is the ashoka tree.

[1192] Shatadhriti is a name for both Brahma and Indra and could mean either.

[1193] Bharata.

[1194] Guilds.

[1195] North Kosala.

[1196] Sita.

[1197] Vasishtha.

[1198] After sacrifices, he donated four parts of his kingdom to the four officiating priests.

[1199] Vasishtha.

[1200] Auspicious ornaments a married woman, who is not a widow, should wear.

[1201] The brahmanas.

[1202] That is, sages who should not be punished by the king.

[1203] Valmiki.

[1204] The name of the other son is not stated. Elsewhere, it is stated in different places as Chandraketu or Angada.

[1205] Raghupati is Rama's name, the lord of Raghu.

[1206] The word chaitya has several meanings—sacrificial shed, temple, altar, sanctuary and a tree that grows along the road.

[1207] The village (*grama*) of Kalapa has been speculatively located in various places, including near Badarikashrama. The last remaining kings of the solar and lunar dynasties are respectively Maru and Devapi. It is believed that they meditate and reside there, waiting for kali yuga to be over.

[1208] Abhimanyu killed Brihadbala in the Kurukshetra war.

[1209] There is a slight problem of tense. Brihadrana must already have been born.

[1210] To be an officiating priest at Indra's sacrifice.

[1211] Nimi.

[1212] That is, time would pass.
[1213] That is, Vasishtha. Vasishtha was Shuka's great-great-grandfather, Vasishtha to Shakti, Shakti to Parashara, Parashara to Vedavyasa and Vedavyasa to Shuka. Mitra and Varuna's semen impregnated Urvashi.
[1214] Nimi's.
[1215] *Nimisha* is the opening and closing of the eye, the twinkling. Nimi resides there.
[1216] The word Janaka is derived from *janma* (birth). One without a body (*deha*) is *vi-deha*. *Vaideha* is derived from this. *Mithila* is derived from *mathana* (churning). Janaka is Mithila, the city is Mithilaa.
[1217] This is Rama's wife, Sita. All kings of the lineage were referred to as Janaka. Shira/sira means plough, while *dhvaja* means flag. The flag signifies fame. He became famous because of the plough.
[1218] Pururava, Ila's son.
[1219] Brahma.
[1220] The tears of joy in Atri's eyes.
[1221] Shiva's preceptor was Angiras, Brihaspati's father.
[1222] The battle over Tara.
[1223] Brihaspati.
[1224] About whose son this was.
[1225] The intelligent and wise one.
[1226] Chapter 9(1).
[1227] Narada.
[1228] The god of love, Kama, Madana.
[1229] The word sukta is used because this is a reference to Rig Veda 10.95.1. There is also an allusion to 10.95.15 in Urvashi's reply.
[1230] It is possible to translate this in more than one way.
[1231] Other than through me.
[1232] A vessel for keeping fire.
[1233] The three Vedas.
[1234] Arani, fire is generated by rubbing them against each other.
[1235] *Urvashyam Urvashi Pururavah*—Pururava is on Urvashi's bosom.
[1236] Jataveda is a name for Agni, the Vedas being generated from Agni's mouth. Here, the three Jatavedas (the three fires of ahavaniya, garhapatya and dakshinagni) are being thought of as the sons of Pururava and Urvashi.

[1237] When the Ganga was flowing down, she disturbed the sage Jahnu and he drank up the water, subsequently released on Bhagiratha's plea. Ganga is therefore known as Jahnavi.
[1238] Richika was descended from Bhrigu's lineage.
[1239] For his wife, the mantra for a brahmana son was uttered. For his mother-in-law, the mantra for a kshatriya son was uttered.
[1240] Yama.
[1241] The river Koshi.
[1242] Parashurama.
[1243] Kartavirya Arjuna.
[1244] Dattatreya.
[1245] Narmada.
[1246] A garland that signifies victory.
[1247] Ravana's.
[1248] Kartavirya Arjuna.
[1249] Kartavirya Arjuna's capital.
[1250] One who possesses/supplies oblations, an indirect reference to a *kamadhenu*, a cow that provides all the objects of desire. Jamadagni could provide the hospitality because of this cow.
[1251] Jamadagni's.
[1252] The leader of an elephant herd.
[1253] Arjuna.
[1254] An akshouhini is an army, consisting of 21,870 chariots, 21,870 elephants, 65,610 horse riders and 109,350 foot soldiers.
[1255] A shataghni was a weapon that could kill one hundred at the same time and could have been a giant catapult.
[1256] Arjuna.
[1257] Brahma.
[1258] Chitraratha.
[1259] Jamadagni.
[1260] The heads of Arjuna's sons.
[1261] Samantapanchaka is the area around Kurukshetra. It is known as Samantapanchaka because it extends for five yojanas in every direction. Alternatively, it is known as Samantapanchaka because Parashurama created five lakes of blood there. The usual number given is therefore five, not nine.
[1262] This does not mean the physical body.

[1263] In the list of saptarshis Jamadagni's name is sometimes mentioned.
[1264] Vishvamitra.
[1265] Vishvamitra.
[1266] Shunahshepa.
[1267] Literally, protected by the gods.
[1268] Barbarians, those who did not speak Sanskrit.
[1269] That is, Shunahshepa.
[1270] Vishvamitra.
[1271] Shunaka's son.
[1272] Raji.
[1273] Raji's sons.
[1274] Brihaspati.
[1275] Indra.
[1276] The comparison is with the five senses and the mind.
[1277] Temporarily, Indra was dislodged from his position as the king of the gods and Nahusha became Indra. However, he desired Indrani/Shachi, Indra's wife, and caused offence to both her and brahmanas. The brahmanas cursed him that he would fall down from heaven and become a python (ajagara) on earth.
[1278] Kavya/Shukracharya was the preceptor of the danavas and his daughter was Devayani. Vrishaparva was the king of the danavas and his daughter was Sharmishtha.
[1279] Pratiloma means against the natural order and applies to progeny where the mother is superior in varna to the father.
[1280] Parvati.
[1281] *Balibhuja*, a creature feeding on leftovers and scraps. Usually, this means a crow, but can also mean a sparrow.
[1282] Kacha was Brihaspati's son. Shukra knew the art of sanjivani, also known as *mrita-sanjivani*, the knowledge that brings the dead back to life. When the gods and the demons fought, the demons were brought back to life by Shukra and the gods, deprived of the knowledge, suffered. Kacha was sent to Shukra, to become his disciple and learn this art. In the process, Devayani fell in love with Kacha. But Kacha refused her, arguing that since she was his preceptor's daughter, she was like his sister. At this, Devayani cursed Kacha that his knowledge would prove to be futile and Kacha cursed Devayani that no brahmana would marry her.

[1283] There are grains left after a crop has been harvested, or after grain has been milled. If one subsists on these leftovers, this is known as *unchavritti*. The mode of subsistence followed by a pigeon refers to this, picking up grain from the ground.
[1284] Devayani.
[1285] That it might be adharma to refuse a lady.
[1286] Yadu wanted to renounce everything. However, he wanted to experience material pleasures first.
[1287] A father's.
[1288] Yayati.
[1289] Hari is all pervasive, like the sky.
[1290] Yayati.
[1291] A fire.
[1292] The five senses and the mind.
[1293] The three gunas.
[1294] About the goat.
[1295] Travellers meet temporarily at a watering hole. Relatives are no more than that.
[1296] Interpreted as the gross and/or subtle bodies.
[1297] Five senses of perception and five organs of action.
[1298] Lakshmi.
[1299] The apsara Menaka was her mother.
[1300] Meaning that she agreed.
[1301] In the gandharva form of marriage, the groom and bride fall in love and marry.
[1302] Literally, a vessel made out of leather.
[1303] Dirghatama.
[1304] One badva numbers 13,084.
[1305] The celestial women.
[1306] The wives thought their husband would suspect them of infidelity.
[1307] Bharata.
[1308] Mamata. Brihaspati's elder brother was Utathya. Because of Brihaspati's curse, Utathya and Mamata's child, Dirghatama, was born blind. Brihaspati and Mamata's child was Bharadvaja.
[1309] Bharadvaja.
[1310] The shloka is terse and has to be expanded and explained. The gods made Brihaspati and Mamata speak these words to each other. This is the

natural explanation. The word *dvaja* means born from two people and both Brihaspati and Mamata use this word. Brihaspati means that the child has been born from his semen and his brother's kshetra. Mamata means that the child has been born from Brihaspati's semen and herself. The word *bhara* means to nurture. Hence, Bharadvaja.

[1311] Bharata's.

[1312] Bharadvaja's name, after he was adopted by Bharata.

[1313] Made out of wheat flour, sugar, ghee and milk.

[1314] Of yoga.

[1315] The pulkasa.

[1316] The brahmana, vrishala, master of dogs and pulkasa.

[1317] From *pancha* or five.

[1318] That is, Panchalas. Panchala was divided into a North Panchala and a South Panchala. This is a description of North Panchala. The South Panchala lineage was through Bhallada.

[1319] Jarasandha means joined by Jara; Jara was a demoness.

[1320] The word for peace is *shanti*.

[1321] A parivetta is someone who marries or accepts a share in a sacrifice before his elder brother.

[1322] On the basis of Devapi's story, recounted elsewhere, we have deviated from standard translations. The words are such that they do require some interpretation. Devapi had leprosy and was unworthy to succeed Pratipa. That is the reason he retired to the forest. Interpretations often suggest Devapi deviated from the norms. On the contrary, Devapi abided by the norms and it is the ministers and brahmanas who deviated. When Devapi refused the kingdom, Indra, the god of rains, showered down.

[1323] Parashurama.

[1324] Shantanu's wife was Satyavati. Chitrangada and Vichitravirya were her sons. Satyavati was the daughter of a king of fishermen, hence the use of the word dasha, meaning lowly class.

[1325] Satyavati. This son was Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa.

[1326] The Bhagavata Purana.

[1327] By Bhishma.

[1328] The wind god.

[1329] A putrika is a daughter who is regarded as a son. After marriage, she lives in her father's household. Her son is regarded as her father's son and becomes the heir. Chitrangadaa, the princess of Manipura, was a pu-

trika. Therefore, Babhruvahana came to be regarded as the son of the king of Manipura.

[1330] An atiratha is a great warrior, superior to a maharatha.

[1331] The three Vedas.

[1332] Hastinapura.

[1333] Yayati's son.

[1334] Rishyashringa was the son of the sage Vibhandaka and a doe.

[1335] Romapada. Romapada performed a sacrifice for offspring and Rishyashringa was brought to the sacrifice. Indra immediately showered down.

[1336] Indra.

[1337] Adhiratha.

[1338] This son was Karna.

[1339] Druhyu was Yayati's son.

[1340] Turvasu was Yayati's son.

[1341] This adopted son was Dushyanta.

[1342] Not to be confused with Kunti, Pandu's wife.

[1343] Bhadrasena is the same as Bhadrasenaka.

[1344] That is, Arjuna.

[1345] The five senses and the mind.

[1346] With Parashurama.

[1347] Meaning Sagara.

[1348] An elephant, a horse, a chariot, women, an arrow, a treasury, a garland, garments, a tree that yielded objects of desire, a javelin, a noose, a jewel, an umbrella and a vimana.

[1349] She was a courtesan.

[1350] Not to be confused with Pandu's wife.

[1351] Devavridha and Babhru.

[1352] Thus known as Satyaki.

[1353] The text doesn't make it clear that these were Andhaka's sons.

[1354] Tumburu was a gandharva.

[1355] Viduratha was Chitraratha's son.

[1356] *Dundubhi* is a kettledrum and *anaka* is a larger drum.

[1357] Shura.

[1358] Pritha is also known as Kunti.

[1359] Hiranyaksha.

[1360] Vinda and Anuvinda.

[1361] The same as Rashtrapalikaa.
[1362] As will be apparent, this is not a complete listing of all of Vasudeva's wives.
[1363] Bhadra's name.
[1364] There are eight Vasus.
[1365] Since Balarama was Shesha.
[1366] This is very similar to Bhagavad Gita 4.7.
[1367] Since Krishna's birth is still in the future, there is a slight tense problem in the text.
[1368] The simile makes the English sound strange. The hands joined in salutation are cupped palms used to touch the water of tirthas, while the ears are used to hear.
[1369] This is the King Nimi, who made them blink.
[1370] Jaya is Arjuna's name. Krishna announced this as Arjuna's victory.

[1371] Meaning Balarama.
[1372] For a pointless reason.
[1373] *Goshpada* literally means the mark of a cow's foot in the soil and the small puddle of water that fills up such a mark, that is, a trifle. The text uses the word *vatsapada*, which is stronger, since it means the mark of a calf's foot in the soil.
[1374] Dvaraka.
[1375] That is, Shounaka.
[1376] Parikshit.
[1377] The Ganga, which flows in the three worlds.
[1378] Shiva.
[1379] In this context, Vrishakapi is Vishnu or Krishna's name. Etymologically, it means someone whose virtue cannot be agitated. Purusha sukta is a reference to hymn 10.90 in Rig Veda.
[1380] The desires are carried forward into the next body. This shloka has been interpreted in other ways too.
[1381] Either from enemies in this life, or from consequences in the next life.
[1382] Sama is conciliation, this bit is obvious. Bheda probably means the prospect of being harmed by others.
[1383] Kamsa.
[1384] My son may kill him.
[1385] Shura's son, Vasudeva.
[1386] Meaning Nanda and Vasudeva.
[1387] Vishnu. There is a contradiction with what has been said about Kirtiman.
[1388] Kamsa.
[1389] From Narada.
[1390] Meaning Aghasura.
[1391] Bana is Banasura. Bhouma is the earth's son, that is, Narakasura. Magadha is Jarasandha, the king of Magadha.
[1392] Joy at the birth, misery at the prospect of the son being killed.
[1393] Gokula means a settlement of cattle and is part of the broader region of Vraja.
[1394] Vasudeva's other wives.
[1395] Krishnaa.
[1396] *Samkarshana* means to draw away or attract. He was taken away from Devaki's womb and placed in Rohini's. Rama is based on the word that

means to cause delight. *Bala* means strength.

[1397] Yogamaya.

[1398] Vasudeva.

[1399] Devaki.

[1400] Past, present and future, or during creation, preservation and destruction.

[1401] Satyam and ritam, with ritam being translated as the personified form of truth. Alternatively, ritam is divine truth and satyam is the more usual kind of truth.

[1402] This simile has diverse interpretations. A possible one is the following. The single base is the universe/human body, the two fruits are happiness and unhappiness, the three roots are sattva, rajas and tamas, the four saps are dharma, artha, kama and moksha, the five attributes are the five elements, the six states are birth, existence, growth, maturity, decay and destruction, the seven sheaths are skin, blood, flesh, fat, bone, marrow and semen, the eight branches are the five senses, mind, intelligence and ahamkara, the nine holes are two ears, two eyes, two nostrils, mouth, genitals and anus, the ten coverings are the ten breaths of life prana, apana, vyana, samana, udana, naga, kurma, krikala, devadatta and dhananjaya and the two birds are the jivatman and the paramatman.

[1403] The reservoir after destruction and the favours are for preservation.

[1404] The imprint left by a calf's foot.

[1405] There are different interpretations of this shloka.

[1406] Hayagriva.

[1407] Rama.

[1408] Parashurama.

[1409] Vamana.

[1410] This shloka is addressed to Devaki.

[1411] That is, Rohini (Aldebaran) was in the ascendant. The divinity associated with Rohini is Brahma, Prajapati. The text refers to Brahma in an indirect way, as the son of the one without birth (Aja or Vishnu).

[1412] The chakra; one hand held a lotus.

[1413] He was not in a position to physically give them the cows. Therefore, he gave them mentally. That is the interpretation.

[1414] There are different ways of interpreting this shloka and some of the succeeding ones.

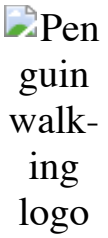
[1415] The universe.

[1416] The birth is only an appearance and is not real. Similarly, Krishna's birth is also not real, but appears that way.
[1417] As sattva.
[1418] *Ashesha* means one who is complete, without anything left.
[1419] The unmanifest here refers to Prakriti. Hence, the one who directs/controls Prakriti.
[1420] Measure of time, three lavas are known to constitute a nimesha.
[1421] The night of universal destruction.
[1422] Vasudeva.
[1423] Meaning, born from Prishni's womb.
[1424] Shesha's hoods were like an umbrella.
[1425] The river Yamuna.
[1426] Shri's lord is Vishnu and the reference to the ocean is a reference to the incident in the Ramayana.
[1427] Yogamaya was born after Krishna.
[1428] It is left implicit that Yogamaya vanished after saying this.
[1429] Trusted their prophecy.
[1430] This is specifically addressed to Devaki.
[1431] The text uses the word Yoganidra, which for these purposes, is the same as Yogamaya.
[1432] Ishvara means Shiva and the four-faced one is Brahma.
[1433] The sutas were charioteers, as well as raconteurs of tales. Magadhas were minstrels and bards. So were bandis. But magadhas seem to have also composed, while bandis sung the compositions of others.
[1434] With water.
[1435] *Kanchuka*s.
[1436] Tending to the guests.
[1437] Vasudeva.
[1438] Nanda.
[1439] Vasudeva.
[1440] Krishna and Balarama.
[1441] Balarama.
[1442] Rohini.
[1443] Dharma, artha and kama.
[1444] About disturbances in Gokula.
[1445] Yashoda and Rohini.

[1446] A gavyuti is a measure of distance, equal to two *krosha*s (four miles) or one krosha (two miles).
[1447] Twelve of Vishnu's names for twelve parts of the body—Keshava (forehead), Narayana (stomach), Madhava (chest), Govinda (throat), Vishnu (right armpit), Madhusudana (right arm), Trivikrama (right ear), Vamana (left armpit), Shridhara (left arm), Hrishikesha (left ear), Padmanabha (back) and Damodara (waist).
[1448] Anga-nyasa is the mental appropriation (nyasa) of different limbs of the body (anga) to different divinities. Kara-nyasa is similarly done to different parts of the hand (*kara*). This is an act of purification.
[1449] Bija-nyasa uses a *bija mantra* to invoke divinities on different parts of the body.
[1450] Hayagriva.
[1451] These are different kinds of demons/demonesses and one needn't explain what each one means or does.
[1452] Yashoda.
[1453] This is not just Yashoda and Rohini, but other gopis too. The reference is to the incident that occurs in Chapter 13, Chapter 13.20 onwards.
[1454] Not everyone resided in the inner parts of Vraja.
[1455] Rohini.
[1456] Yashoda.
[1457] In the third month, there are special festivities when an infant turns over on the bed.
[1458] Yashoda had placed him in a cradle under the cart.
[1459] Nanda.
[1460] Krishna.
[1461] Tripura.
[1462] Though not explicitly stated, this seems to be the words of the gopas and the gopis. It has thus been placed within quotes.
[1463] Yashoda.
[1464] Rivers.
[1465] Nanda.
[1466] Alternatively, cause and effect. The sage Garga composed a treatise on astrology.
[1467] Naming ceremony.
[1468] Rama is derived from the word for causing delight and bala means strength.

[1469] Samkarshana means to drag, bring together.
[1470] Respectively for satya yuga, treta yuga and *dvapara yuga*. The dark is for kali yuga.
[1471] Therefore, he will be known as Krishna (dark).
[1472] The son is Vaasudeva, the father is Vasudeva.
[1473] Meaning inside the houses.
[1474] Rohini and Yashoda.
[1475] Before the milking of the cows. Thus, the calves drink up all the milk.
[1476] Using those to climb up. As in mortar and pestle.
[1477] Yashoda.
[1478] Yashoda.
[1479] What she had seen.
[1480] The three Vedas.
[1481] Vasudeva and Devaki.
[1482] To be born on earth.
[1483] The milk was being boiled.
[1484] Yashoda.
[1485] Arjuna is a tree that stands tall and upright, *Pentaptera arjuna*.
[1486] The text uses the word tamas. It made tamas guna pervade Narada, or made Narada fall prey to the darkness of ignorance.
[1487] Depending on what is done to the body after death. If buried, worms eat it. If burnt, it becomes ashes. Or it may be eaten by predatory animals and birds and turn to excrement.
[1488] A master may give a servant food.
[1489] In the case of a putrika son.
[1490] Who may capture the owner of the body.
[1491] In case a person has been bought as a servant or slave.
[1492] When the body is eaten after death.
[1493] Like trees.
[1494] This shloka, and the immediately succeeding one, has different interpretations.
[1495] Rudra.
[1496] Meaning both Nalakubara and Manigriva.
[1497] Nanda.
[1498] Putana.
[1499] Trinavarta.
[1500] To bring down fruit from trees.

[1501] The daitya assumed its own form at the time of death.
[1502] *Baka* means stork.
[1503] Brahma's father.
[1504] Vraja means a settlement of cattle and cowherds and is therefore being used for the new residence in Vrindavana.
[1505] The game known as leapfrog. There is a natural allusion to the apes building a bridge across the ocean in the Ramayana.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Acknowledgements

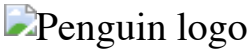
The corpus of the Puranas is immense, in scope, as well as in length. Taken together, the eighteen Puranas are four times the size of the Mahabharata. If the prospect of translating the Mahabharata seemed challenging, the task of translating the Puranas was/is downright disconcerting and intimidating. After the Mahabharata, the Harivamsha and the Valmiki Ramayana, it was a natural transition, the obvious thing to do. However, it seemed to be an impossible task. Did one dare to start? If so, where? Since there was no 'Critical Edition' of the Puranas, what text should one use? I have now come to believe what should be obvious. Everything one does is determined by destiny. One is merely an instrument, implementing someone else's will. Thus, destiny intervened. It first intervened in the form of my dear friend, Professor Ramesh Kumar Pandey, vice chancellor, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha. He suggested, in the absence of Critical Editions, one should use the Nirnaya Sagar texts. They have much greater acceptance than other versions. In addition, urging me along the road, he gifted me the Nirnaya Sagar texts of eleven of the eighteen Mahapuranas.

That still left a question unanswered. Which Purana should one start with? Destiny intervened yet again, in the form of another friend, Shri Yudhistir Govinda Das of ISKCON. For some time, Yudhistir had been urging us to visit Mayapur. That visit, pending for quite some time, materialized so that it synchronized with the annual Gaura Purnima festival. What better time to visit Mayapur? Yudhistir also gifted us a set of Prabhupada's translation of the Bhagavata Purana. This determined the answer to the question. The Bhagavata Purana it would have to be. One does indeed deplore the general ignorance about the treasure trove the Puranas are. The dumbed down versions one usually sees or reads are pale shadows of what these

texts actually contain. Having said this, the Purana that most people are familiar with is probably the Bhagavata Purana. Therefore, the Bhagavata Purana was a good choice. As a token of appreciation, these three volumes are dedicated to Yudhistir Govinda Das. As Yudhistir well knows, this is nothing more than a token. Dedications are meant for the one who is beyond either of us.

All these translations, ever since the Bhagavad Gita in 2006, have been published by Penguin India. I am indebted to Penguin for believing in the utility of not just the Bhagavata Purana translation, but the entire Purana Project, which still seems to stretch into the interminable horizon of the future. But one step at a time. For the record, with the Bhagavata Purana published, I am now translating Markandeya Purana, the next one in the series. In particular, Meru Gokhale and Ambar Sahil Chatterjee at Penguin India have been exceptionally patient, persevering and encouraging. But for them, the Purana Project might not have taken off. Paloma Dutta has been the editor since the days of the Mahabharata translation. That makes life a whole lot easier. She knows my style and I know hers. There is a Paloma hand in the product, even though it won't be detected and isn't meant to be.

ययोरात्मसमं वित्तं जन्मैश्वर्याकृतिर्भवः । तयोर्विवाहो मैत्रि च नोत्तमाधमयोः क्वचित । (10.60.15) Ever since this translation journey started in 2006, my wife, Suparna Banerjee (Debroy) has been a constant source of support, ensuring the conducive and propitious environment required for the work to continue unimpeded. She has been much more than that. (She was with me in Mayapur too.) In a rich language like Sanskrit, I can think of close to twenty words—all capturing the different nuances of 'wife'. Suparna has been all these and more. अनुकूलकलत्रे यस्तस्य स्वर्ग इहैव हि । प्रतिकूलकलत्रस्य नरको नात्र संशयः॥ This too is destiny.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3

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Bibek Debroy is a renowned economist, scholar and translator. He has worked in universities, research institutes, industry and for the government. He has widely published books, papers and articles on economics. As a translator, he is best known for his magnificent rendition of the Mahabharata in ten volumes, the three-volume translation of the Valmiki Ramayana and additionally the *Harivamsha*, published to wide acclaim by Penguin Classics. He is also the author of *Sarama and Her Children*, which splices his interest in Hinduism with his love for dogs.

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For Yudhistir Govinda Das

Introduction

The word '*purana*' means old, ancient. The Puranas are old texts, usually referred to in conjunction with Itihasa (the Ramayana and the Mahabharata). [1] Whether Itihasa originally meant only the Mahabharata—with the Ramayana being added to that expression later—is a proposition on which there has been some discussion. But that's not relevant for our purposes. In the Chandogya Upanishad, there is an instance of the sage Narada approaching the sage Sanatkumara for instruction. When asked about what he already knew, Narada says he knows Itihasa and Purana, the Fifth Veda. [2] In other words, Itihasa–Purana possessed an elevated status. This by no means implies that the word 'purana', as used in these two Upanishads and other texts too, is to be understood in the sense of the word being applied to a set of texts known as the Puranas today. The Valmiki Ramayana is believed to have been composed by Valmiki and the Mahabharata by Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa. After composing the Mahabharata, Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa is believed to have composed the Puranas. The use of the word 'composed' immediately indicates that Itihasa–Purana are *smriti* texts, with a human origin. They are not *shruti* texts, with a divine origin. Composition does not mean these texts were rendered into writing. Instead, there was a process of oral narration, with inevitable noise in the transmission and distribution process. Writing came much later.

Frederick Eden Pargiter's book on the Puranas is still one of the best introductions to this corpus. [3] To explain the composition and transmission process, one can do no better than to quote him:

> The Vayu and Padma Puranas tell us how ancient genealogies, tales and ballads were preserved, namely, by the *sutas*, [4] and they describe the suta's duty . . . The Vayu,

> Brahmanda and Visnu give an account, how the original Purana came into existence . . . Those three Puranas say— Krsna Dvaipayana divided the single Veda into four and arranged them, and so was called Vyasa. He entrusted them to his four disciples, one to each, namely Paila, Vaisampayana, Jaimini and Sumantu. Then with tales, anecdotes, songs and lore that had come down from the ages he compiled a Purana, and taught it and the Itihasa to his fifth disciple, the suta Romaharsana or Lomaharsana . . . After that he composed the Mahabharata. The epic itself implies that the Purana preceded it . . . As explained above, the sutas had from remote times preserved the genealogies of gods, *rishi*s and kings, and traditions and ballads about celebrated men, that is, exactly the material—tales, songs and ancient lore—out of which the Purana was constructed. Whether or not Vyasa composed the original Purana or superintended its compilation, is immaterial for the present purpose . . . After the original Purana was composed, by Vyasa as is said, his disciple Romaharsana taught it to his son Ugrashravas, and Ugrashravas the *souti* [5] appears as the reciter in some of the present Puranas; and the sutas still retained the right to recite it for their livelihood. But, as stated above, Romaharsana taught it to his six disciples, at least five of whom were brahmans. It thus passed into the hands of brahmans, and their appropriation and development of it increased in the course of time, as the Purana grew into many Puranas, as Sanskrit learning became peculiarly the province of the brahmans, and as new and frankly sectarian Puranas were composed.

Pargiter cited reasons for his belief that the Mahabharata was composed before the original Purana, though that runs contrary to the popular perception about the Mahabharata having been composed before the Puranas. That popular and linear perception is too simplistic, since texts evolved parallelly, not necessarily sequentially.

In popular perception, Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa composed the Mahabharata. He then composed the Puranas. Alternatively, he composed an original core Purana text, which has been lost, and others embellished it through additions. The adjective ‘purana’, meaning old account or old text, became a proper noun, signifying a specific text. To be classified as a Purana, a Purana has to possess five attributes—*pancha lakshmana*. That is, five topics must be discussed—*sarga, pratisarga, vamsha, manvantara* and *vamshanucharita*. The clearest statement of this is in the Matsya Purana. A text like the Bhagavata Purana also mentions these five attributes, but adds another five, making it a total of ten. Unlike the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, there is no Critical Edition of the Puranas. [6] Therefore, citing chapter

and verse from a Purana text is somewhat more difficult, since verse, if not chapter, may vary from text to text. With that caveat, the relevant shloka (verse) should be in the fifty-third chapter of the Matysa Purana. Sarga means the original or primary creation. The converse of sarga is universal destruction, or *pralaya*. That period of sarga lasts for one of Brahma's days, known as *kalpa*. When Brahma sleeps, during his night, there is universal destruction.

In measuring time, there is the notion of a *yuga* (era) and there are four yugas—*satya yuga* (also known as *krita yuga*), *treta yuga, dvapara yuga* and *kali yuga*. Satya yuga lasts for 4,000 years, treta yuga for 3,000 years, dvapara yuga for 2,000 years and kali yuga for 1,000 years. However, all these are not human years. The gods have a different timescale and these are the years of the gods. As one progressively moves from satya yuga to kali yuga, virtue (*dharma*) declines. But at the end of kali yuga, the cycle begins afresh, with satya yuga. An entire cycle, from satya yuga to kali yuga, is known as a *mahayuga* (great era). However, a mahayuga is not just 10,000 years. There is a further complication. At the beginning and the end of every yuga, there are some additional years. These additional years are 400 for satya yuga, 300 for treta yuga, 200 for dvapara yuga and 100 for kali yuga. A mahayuga thus has 12,000 years, adding years both at the beginning and at the end. 1,000 mahayugas make up one kalpa. A kalpa is also divided into fourteen *manvantara*s, a manvantara being a period during which a Manu presides and rules over creation. Therefore, there are 71.4 mahayugas in a manvantara. Our present kalpa is known as the Shveta Varaha Kalpa. Within that, six Manus have come and gone. Their names are (1) Svyambhuva Manu, (2) Svarochisha Manu, (3) Uttama Manu, (4) Tapasa Manu, (5) Raivata Manu and (6) Chakshusha Manu. The present Manu is known as Vaivasvata Manu. Vivasvat, also written as Vivasvan, is the name of Surya, the sun god. Vaivasvata Manu has that name because he is Surya's son. Not only the Manus, but the gods, the ruler of the gods and the seven great sages, known as the *saptarshi*s (seven rishis), change from one manvantara to another. Indra is a title of the ruler of the gods. It is not a proper name. The present Indra is Purandara. However, in a different man-

vantara, someone else will hold the title. In the present seventh manvantara, known as Vaivasvata manvantara, there will also be 71.4 mahayugas. We are in the twenty-eighth of these. Since a different Vedavyasa performs that task of classifying and collating the Vedas in every mahayuga, Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa is the twenty-eighth in that series. Just so that it is clear, Vedavyasa isn't a proper name. It is a title conferred on someone who collates and classifies the Vedas. There have been twenty-seven who have held the title of Vedavyasa before Krishna Dvaipayana and he is the twenty-eighth. His proper name is Krishna Dvaipayana—Krishna because he was dark and Dvaipayna because he was born on an island (*dvipa*). This gives us an idea of what the topic of manvantara is about. This still leaves pratisarga, vamsha and vamshanucharita. The two famous dynasties/lineages were the solar dynasty (*survya vamsha*) and lunar dynasty (*chandra vamsha*) and all the famous kings belonged to one or other of these two dynasties. Vamshanucharita is about these lineages and the conduct of these kings. There were the gods and sages (rishis) too, not always born through a process of physical procreation. Their lineages are described under the heading of vamsha. Finally, within that cycle of primary creation and destruction, there are smaller and secondary cycles of creation and destruction. That's the domain of pratisarga. In greater or lesser degree, all the Puranas cover these five topics, some more than the others.

There are Puranas, and there are Puranas. Some are known as Sthala Puranas, describing the greatness and sanctity of a specific geographical place. Some are known as Upa-Puranas, minor Puranas. The listing of Upa-Puranas has regional variations and there is no countrywide consensus about the list of Upa-Puranas, though it is often accepted that there are eighteen of them. The Puranas we have in mind are known as Maha-Puranas, major Puranas. Henceforth, when we use the word Puranas, we mean Maha-Puranas. There is consensus that there are eighteen Maha-Puranas, though it is not obvious that this number of eighteen existed right from the beginning. The names are mentioned in several of these texts, including a shloka that follows the shloka cited from the Matsya Purana. The listing is also included in the last sections of the Bhagavata Purana itself. Thus, the eighteen Pu-

ranas are (1) Agni (15,400); (2) Bhagavata (18,000); (3) Brahma (10,000); (4) Brahmanda (12,000); (5) Brahmavaivarta (18,000); (6) Garuda (19,000); (7) Kurma (17,000); (8) Linga (11,000); (9) Markandeya (9,000); (10) Matsya (14,000); (11) Narada (25,000); (12) Padma (55,000); (13) Shiva (24,000); (14) Skanda (81,100); (15) Vamana (10,000); (16) Varaha (24,000); (17) Vayu (24,000) and (18) Vishnu (23,000). A few additional points about this list. First, the Harivamsha is sometimes loosely described as a Purana, but strictly speaking, it is not a Purana. It is more like an addendum to the Mahabharata. Second, Bhavishya (14,500) is sometimes mentioned, with Vayu excised from the list. However, the Vayu Purana exhibits many more Purana characteristics than the Bhavishya Purana does. There are references to a Bhavishyat Purana that existed, but that may not necessarily be the Bhavishya Purana as we know it today. That's true of some other Puranas too. Texts have been completely restructured hundreds of years later. Third, it is not just a question of Bhavishya Purana and Vayu Purana. In the lists given in some Puranas, Vayu is part of the eighteen, but Agni is knocked out. In some others, Narasimha and Vayu are included, but Brahmanda and Garuda are knocked out. Fourth, when a list is given, the order also indicates some notion of priority or importance. Since that varies from text to text, our listing is simply alphabetical, according to the English alphabet.

The numbers within brackets indicate the number of shlokas each of these Puranas has, or is believed to have. The range is from 10,000 in Brahma to a mammoth 81,100 in Skanda. The aggregate is a colossal 409,500 shlokas. To convey a rough idea of the orders of magnitude, the Mahabharata has, or is believed to have, 100,000 shlokas. It's a bit difficult to convert a shloka into word counts in English, especially because Sanskrit words have a slightly different structure. However, as a very crude approximation, one shloka is roughly twenty words. Thus, 100,000 shlokas become two million words and 400,000 shlokas, four times the size of the Mahabharata, amounts to eight million words. There is a reason for using the expression 'is believed to have', as opposed to 'has'. Rendering into writing is of later vintage, the initial process was one of oral transmission. In the process,

many texts have been lost, or are retained in imperfect condition. This is true of texts in general and is also specifically true of Itihasa and Puranas. The Critical Edition of the Mahabharata, mentioned earlier, no longer possesses 100,000 shlokas. Including the Harivamsha, there are around 80,000 shlokas. The Critical Edition of the Mahabharata has of course deliberately excised some shlokas. For the Puranas, there is no counterpart of Critical Editions. However, whichever edition of the Puranas one chooses, the number of shlokas in that specific Purana will be smaller than the numbers given above. Either those many shlokas did not originally exist, or they have been lost. This is the right place to mention that a reading of the Puranas assumes a basic degree of familiarity with the Valmiki Ramayana and the Mahabharata, more the latter than the former. Without that familiarity, one will often fail to appreciate the context completely. Specifically for the Bhagavata Purana, more than passing familiarity with the Bhagavad Gita—strictly speaking, a part of the Mahabharata—helps. [7]

Other than the five attributes, the Puranas have a considerable amount of information on geography and even geological changes (changes in courses of rivers) and astronomy. Therefore, those five attributes shouldn't suggest the Puranas have nothing more. They do, and they have therefore been described as encyclopedias. Bharatavarsha is vast and heterogeneous and each Purana may very well have originated in one particular part of the country. Accordingly, within that broad compass of an overall geographical description, the extent of geographical information varies from Purana to Purana. Some are more familiar with one part of the country than with another. Though not explicitly mentioned in the five attributes, the Puranas are also about pursuing dharma, *artha*, *kama* and *moksha*, the four objectives of human existence, and are about the four *varna*s and the four *ashrama*s. The general understanding and practice of dharma is based much more on the Puranas than on the Vedas. Culture, notions of law, rituals, architecture and iconography are based on the Puranas. There is beautiful poetry too, included in parts of the Bhagavata Purana.

Perhaps one should mention that there are two ways these eighteen Puranas are classified. The trinity has Brahma as the creator, Vishnu as the

preserver and Shiva as the destroyer. Therefore, Puranas where creation themes feature prominently are identified with Brahma (Brahma, Brahmanda, Brahmavaivarta, Markandeya). Puranas where Vishnu features prominently are identified as Vaishnava Puranas (Bhagavata, Garuda, Kurma, Matysa, Narada, Padma, Vamana, Varaha, Vishnu). Puranas where Shiva features prominently are identified as Shaiva Puranas (Agni, Linga, Shiva, Skanda, Vayu). While there is a grain of truth in this, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva are all important and all three feature in every Purana. Therefore, beyond the relative superiority of Vishnu vis-à-vis Shiva, the taxonomy probably doesn't serve much purpose. The second classification is even more tenuous and is based on the three *guna*s of *sattva* (purity), *rajas* (passion) and *tamas* (ignorance). For example, the Uttara Khanda of the Padma Purana has a few shlokas along these lines, recited by Shiva to Parvati. With a caveat similar to the one mentioned earlier, this should be in the 236th chapter of Uttara Khanda. According to this, the Puranas characterized by sattva are Bhagavata, Garuda, Narada, Padma, Varaha and Vishnu. Those characterized by rajas are Bhavishya, Brahma, Brahmanda, Brahmavaivarta, Markandeya and Vamana, Those characterized by tamas are Agni, Kurma, Linga, Matysa, Skanda and Shiva.

Within a specific Purana text, there are earlier sections, as well as later ones. That makes it difficult to date a Purana, except as a range. Across Purana texts, there are older Puranas, as well as later ones. Extremely speculatively, the dating will be something like the following. (1) Agni (800–1100 CE); (2) Bhagavata (500–1000 CE); (3) Brahma (700–1500 CE); (4) Brahmanda (400–600 CE); (5) Brahmavaivarta (700–1500 CE); (6) Garuda (800–1100 CE); (7) Kurma (600–900 CE); (8) Linga (500–1000 CE); (9) Markandeya (250–700 CE); (10) Matsya (200–500 CE); (11) Narada (900–1600 CE); (12) Padma (400–1600 CE); (13) Shiva (1000–1400 CE); (14) Skanda (600–1200 CE); (15) Vamana (450–900 CE); (16) Varaha (1000–1200 CE); (17) Vayu (350–550 CE); (18) Vishnu (300 BCE to 450 CE); and (19) Bhavishya (500–1900 CE). Reiterating once again that there is no great precision in these ranges, by this reckoning, the Vishnu Purana is the oldest

and some parts of the Bhavishya Purana are as recent as the nineteenth century.

As mentioned earlier, there is no Critical Edition for the Puranas. Therefore, one has to choose a Sanskrit text one is going to translate from. If one is going to translate all the Puranas, it is preferable, though not essential, that one opts for a common source for all the Purana texts. The common source for the Bhagavata Purana, and the subsequent Purana translations, is the one brought out by Nag Publishers, with funding from the ministry of human resource development. [8] A transliterated Sanskrit text is available through the University of Gottingen. [9] In Devanagari, the text is available at https://sanskritdocuments.org/doc_purana/bhagpur.html?lang=sa, with the transliterated Sanskrit text at http://www.sanskritweb.net/sansdocs/bhagpur.pdf. The Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies at the University of Oxford has a lot of useful resources under the umbrella of the Bhagavata Purana Research Project. [10] Among other things, this research project has published a book that is a bit like an abridged translation of the Bhagavata Purana. [11] The Bhagavata Purana is divided into twelve *skandha*s. The word skandha means trunk, or largish branch. In this context, it means section or segment. Out of these twelve skandhas, the tenth is the longest and is also the most read. Therefore, there are translations of the Bhagavata Purana that are limited to only the Tenth Skandha. Edwin Bryant's rendering of the Tenth Skandha is almost like such a translation. [12] For the entire Bhagavata Purana, there are unabridged translations in Indian languages. However, to the best of my knowledge, there are only five unabridged translations in English: (1) Manmatha Nath Dutt; [13] (2) Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada; [14] (3) Ganesh Vasudeo Tagare; [15] (4) Swami Tapasyananda; [16] and (5) C.L. Goswami and M.A. Shastri. [17] In 1901, Purnendu Narayana Sinha published a version that was close to a translation, but fell just short because it followed the path of retelling. [18] The Sanskrit texts used in these five translations vary a bit and the one used in this translation also varies a bit from the ones used in these five. The Bhagavata Purana is believed to have 18,000 shlokas. The table below shows what this particular Sanskrit version has: just over 14,000

spread across 335 chapters. One should not jump to the conclusion that a large number of shlokas are missing. A few are indeed missing. But sometimes, it is also a question of how one counts a shloka. With the content remaining identical, the text may be counted as one shloka in one place and as two shlokas elsewhere. Our numbering is exactly the same as in the Sanskrit text we have followed. Hence, even though there may be no difference in content between our version of the text and, say, that used by Swami Prabhupada, the numbering will vary a bit. (Sometimes, there are minor differences in the Sanskrit text though.) However, there are some shlokas that are indeed missing and Ganesh Vasudeo Tagare is a good source for translations of these missing shlokas, because those missing shlokas have been separately translated there. When we have enumerated all the chapters, there are two identifying numbers that have been provided. The first number refers to the skandha, the second to the number of the chapter within the skandha. Thus, Chapter 4(30) will be the thirtieth chapter in the fourth Skandha.

Skandha	*Number of chapters*	*Number of shlokas*
1	19	811
2	10	391
3	33	1412
4	31	1450
5	26	738
6	19	855
7	15	752
8	24	929
9	24	962
10	90	3948
11	31	1360
12	13	564
Total	335	14172

In the translations of the Bhagavad Gita, the Mahabharata, the Harivamsha and the Valmiki Ramayana, we followed the principle of not using diacritical marks. The use of diacritical marks (effectively the international alphabet of Sanskrit transliteration) makes the pronunciation and rendering more accurate, but also tends to put off readers who are less academically inclined. Since diacritical marks are not being used, there is a challenge of rendering Sanskrit names in English. Sanskrit is a phonetic language and we have used that principle as a basis. Applied consistently, this means that words are rendered in ways that may seem unfamiliar. Hence, the name of the jewel, often written as Kaustubha, will appear as Koustubha here. This is true of proper names, and, in a few rare cases, of geographical names. The absence of diacritical marks causes some minor problems. How does one distinguish Vasudeva Krishna from Krishna's father, Vasudeva? Often, the context will make the difference clear. If not, we have written the son as Vaasudeva and the father as Vasudeva. In translating, the attempt has been to provide a word-for-word translation, so that if one were to hold up the Sanskrit text, there would be a perfect match.

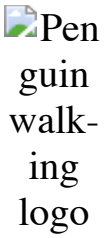
The intention is also to offer a translation, not an interpretation. That sounds like a simple principle to adopt, and for the most part, is easy to follow. However, there is a thin dividing line between translation and interpretation. In some instances, it is impossible to translate without bringing in a little bit of interpretation. Inevitably, interpretation is subjective. We have tried to minimize the problem by (a) reducing interpretation; (b) relegating interpretation to footnotes and (c) when there are alternative interpretations, pointing this out to the reader through those footnotes. If a Purana text is just about the five attributes mentioned, the task isn't that difficult. Take the Bhagavata Purana as an example. In Chapter 2(10), we are told about the ten characteristics of the Bhagavata Purana and these are sarga, *visarga, sthana, poshana, uti,* manvantara, *isha-anukatha, nirodha, mukti* and *ashraya*. These are (1) gross creation; (2) subtle creation; (3) preservation; (4) sustenance; (5) the addiction to the senses; (6) manvantaras; (7) accounts of the lord; (8) withdrawal; (9) liberation and (10) the ultimate refuge. Therefore, the text has much more than the five attributes cited. The

word '*bhagavat*' means the divine one, the illustrious one, the fortunate one, the prosperous one, the blessed one, the sacred one, the holy one. We are often more familiar with the nominative form, *bhagavaan*. Bhagavat/Bhagavaan occur frequently in our text and I have translated the word as 'the illustrious one'. Since this is a Purana devoted to Vishnu, Bhagavat/Bhagavaan typically means Vishnu. But the text is not called Bhagavata Purana; it is in fact called Bhaagavata Purana. What does the word Bhaagavata mean? Taken as an adjective, the word means sacred and Bhaagavata Purana is simply the sacred Purana, a perfectly acceptable meaning. However, taken as a noun, Bhaagavata means a devotee or worshipper of Vishnu—and *bhaagavata dharma* is the dharma of devotion towards Vishnu. Therefore, Bhaagavata Purana is the text that describes this bhaagavata dharma that Vishnu devotees follow.

Hence, it isn't only about stories. As mentioned earlier, the longest Skandha, the tenth, is also the most popular and is read most often. This particular skandha describes Krishna's exploits and pastimes. This includes *rasa lila* and this skandha has some exquisite poetry. The song of the *gopi*s is an example of this. As is thus obvious, this skandha has its fair share of stories. But in the other skandhas, the emphasis is more on dharma and moksha and a mix of *bhakti* (devotion), *advaita* (monism), *dvaita* (dualism), *samkhya* and *yoga*, [19] with notions of *avatara*s (Vishnu's incarnations) brought in. There is the influence of *pancharatra* doctrines and texts. Literally, the term pancharatra means five nights, and is a reference to five nights over which sacrifices were performed. However, there were pancharatra doctrines too and these developed a metaphysical philosophy. If we so wish, we can call it a theology. Vaishnava dharma integrated this pancharatra tradition with the other strands that have just been mentioned. Since this is a synthesis of many different strands, there are bound to be nuances and different schools. What does the Bhagavata Purana teach? What is its philosophy? Beyond the obvious tenet of devotion to Vishnu and emphasis on bhakti yoga, this is extremely difficult to answer. As a text that builds a theology, the Bhagavata Purana is much more complicated than the Bhagavad Gita. Indeed, one could say it builds extensively on that Bhagavad Gita

foundation. Down the years, there have been several commentaries on and interpretations of the Bhagavata Purana. Depending on the language and the timeline for beginning and ending the cut-off, there must be at least two hundred such commentaries and interpretations. Which of these schools or interpretations should one follow? Should one take cognizance of other possible interpretations? In principle, this dilemma can exist in the course of translating any Purana. But in no other Purana is it as serious, because no other Purana devotes such a large percentage of shlokas to philosophy.

The choice in this translation is conscious and is driven by the objective and the target audience. The target audience is the ordinary reader who desires a faithful rendering of the Sanskrit text. The target reader isn't the academic who desires something like a survey of literature. Nor is the target reader a devotee of one particular Vaishnava school. To state it a bit more explicitly, Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, Swami Tapasyananda and C.L. Goswami and M.A. Shastri follow one particular line of commentary or interpretation or school. From an academic's perspective, Ganesh Vasudeo Tagare is the best. His translation also includes an excellent introduction and a detailed note on several different commentators of the Bhagavata Purana, certainly covering the major ones. However, apart from the language of the Tagare rendition not being very smooth, that edition is also layered with complexities which can deter the ordinary reader. On the other hand, I have consciously done what is akin to a contemporary Manmatha Nath Dutt translation. Without distorting, I have chosen the simplest possible interpretation or translation that fits. In a few minor instances, this meant choosing an interpretation that was marginally different from those chosen by these preceding translators. It is possible to criticize the avoidance of complexities, but it is a conscious choice and the dissatisfied reader can always go on to read more copious commentaries and annotations. There is plenty in the Bhagavata Purana to immerse oneself in and this translation is not meant to be the final item on that reading list. It can at best be the first.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Tenth Skandha continued . . .

Chapter 10(1): 69 shlokas
Chapter 10(2): 42 shlokas
Chapter 10(3): 53 shlokas
Chapter 10(4): 46 shlokas
Chapter 10(5): 32 shlokas
Chapter 10(6): 44 shlokas
Chapter 10(7): 37 shlokas
Chapter 10(8): 52 shlokas
Chapter 10(9): 23 shlokas
Chapter 10(10): 43 shlokas
Chapter 10(11): 58 shlokas
Chapter 10(12): 44 shlokas
Chapter 10(13): 64 shlokas
Chapter 10(14): 61 shlokas
Chapter 10(15): 52 shlokas
Chapter 10(16): 67 shlokas
Chapter 10(17): 25 shlokas
Chapter 10(18): 32 shlokas
Chapter 10(19): 16 shlokas
Chapter 10(20): 49 shlokas
Chapter 10(21): 20 shlokas
Chapter 10(22): 38 shlokas
Chapter 10(23): 52 shlokas
Chapter 10(24): 38 shlokas
Chapter 10(25): 33 shlokas
Chapter 10(26): 25 shlokas

Chapter 10(27): 29 shlokas
Chapter 10(28): 17 shlokas
Chapter 10(29): 48 shlokas
Chapter 10(30): 46 shlokas
Chapter 10(31): 19 shlokas
Chapter 10(32): 22 shlokas
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Chapter 10(34): 32 shlokas
Chapter 10(35): 26 shlokas
Chapter 10(36): 40 shlokas
Chapter 10(37): 34 shlokas
Chapter 10(38): 43 shlokas
Chapter 10(39): 57 shlokas
Chapter 10(40): 30 shlokas
Chapter 10(41): 52 shlokas
Chapter 10(42): 38 shlokas
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Chapter 10(60): 59 shlokas
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Chapter 10(65): 32 shlokas
Chapter 10(66): 43 shlokas
Chapter 10(67): 28 shlokas
Chapter 10(68): 54 shlokas
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Chapter 10(70): 47 shlokas
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Chapter 10(73): 34 shlokas
Chapter 10(74): 55 shlokas
Chapter 10(75): 41 shlokas
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Chapter 10(80): 45 shlokas
Chapter 10(81): 41 shlokas
Chapter 10(82): 48 shlokas
Chapter 10(83): 43 shlokas
Chapter 10(84): 71 shlokas
Chapter 10(85): 59 shlokas
Chapter 10(86): 59 shlokas
Chapter 10(87): 50 shlokas
Chapter 10(88): 40 shlokas
Chapter 10(89): 66 shlokas
Chapter 10(90): 50 shlokas

Chapter 10(12)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Once, Hari made up his mind to eat in the forest. He woke up in the morning and used the beautiful tunes of his flute to wake up his friends and the calves. With the calves in front, he then left Vraja. At this sweet sound, thousands of boys went with him, with their pouches, [1] canes, [2] horns and flutes. Each of them placed his own herd, with more than one thousand calves in each, in front. They happily left. They made their own calves mingle in the same herd as Krishna's innumerable calves. They made them graze. Here and there, they engaged in boyish games. They were adorned with glass beads, *gunja* berries, [3] jewels and gold. But in spite of being adorned, they ornamented themselves with fruits, green leaves, bunches of flowers, feathers and minerals. They stole the pouches from each other. When detected, they flung these far away. When the owner caught up, they laughed and flung them further away. When the owner cried, they returned them. Krishna sometimes went far away, to admire the beauty of the forest. "I am first. No I am first." Saying this, they touched him and enjoyed themselves. Some played on flutes. Some blew on horns. Some buzzed, along with the bees. Others called, along with the cuckoos. Some rushed towards shadows. Some walked like proud swans. Some sat down, along with the storks. Some danced with peacocks. Some tugged the tails of young monkeys seated on braches. Some climbed those trees. Some made faces at the monkeys. Some leapt on the branches. Some leapt, along with the frogs. Some got wet from the water in the river. Some laughed at their own shadows. Some cursed their echoes. He is the supreme divinity, and the virtuous who become his servants realize the bliss of the *brahman* [4] through him. Because of his *maya*, he had assumed the form of a human child. They enjoyed themselves with him and created stores of merit for themselves. *Yogi*s who control themselves cannot touch the dust of his feet after the difficulties of many births. But in this land, he himself presented himself before them. How can one describe the good fortune of the residents of Vraja?

'There was a great *asura* named Agha. He saw their happy pastimes and was incapable of tolerating it. The immortals drank *amrita*. But even then,

they always waited for an end to his life, because he disturbed them as long as he was alive. Aghasura saw the boys, with Krishna at the forefront. He was the younger brother of Baki [5] and Baka and had been commanded by Kamsa. "This is the one who has killed both my brother and sister. I will kill him, along with his followers. When these are offered as sesamum seeds and water to my well-wishers, [6] the residents of Vraja are as good as dead. These children are as dear to them as their breath of life. When the breath of life is destroyed, why worry about the body?" Having decided this, he assumed the form of a gigantic python. [7] It was one *yojana* [8] long, as thick as a large mountain. Having assumed this extraordinary form, the deceitful one lay on the path, opening its mouth, which was like a cave, to devour them. The lower lip was on the ground and the upper lip touched the clouds. The mouth was like the cave of a mountain. The fangs were like the peaks of mountains. The inside of the mouth was completely dark. The tongue was like a broad road. The breathing was like a harsh storm. The fiery glance was like a forest conflagration. On seeing it, all of them were of the view that this was a beautiful spot in Vrindavana, shaped in the form of a python with a gaping jaw. They looked at it, as if it was a place to play in. "O friends! Tell us if it is without life, stationed in front of us. Doesn't it resemble the gaping mouth of a snake that will devour us. Isn't that true?" "True. [9] The upper lip looks like a cloud tinged red by the rays of the sun. The lower and reddened lip, on the ground, looks like its shadow. On the right and the left, the corners of the mouth are like caves in mountains. Behold. The fangs seem to resemble lofty peaks of mountains. In length and breadth, the tongue seems to rival a broad road. The inside of the mouth is as dark as the darkness in between two peaks. Behold. The fiery breath is like the harsh wind of a forest conflagration. There is the bad stench of burnt corpses. There is a smell of flesh emerging from the inside. If we enter, will it devour us? Or will it be instantly destroyed by this one, [10] like Baka?" Glancing towards the face of Baka's enemy, they laughed, clapped their hands and entered. They were ignorant about the actual truth and thought what was false to be true. The one who is located inside all creatures knew everything. The illustrious one heard and desiring to protect

those who were his own, made up his mind to prevent them. However, they entered inside the asura's stomach. But it didn't digest the children or the calves. The *rakshasa* remembered about his beloved relatives being slain and waited for Baka's enemy to enter. Krishna is the one who grants everyone freedom from fear. He saw that they had gone outside his control and were without a protector. They were helpless and were like grass, facing the death from its digestive fire. He was filled with compassion, but also surprised at what destiny had done. [11] "What should be done now? Should one allow the wicked one to live? Or should one prevent injury to the innocent and the virtuous? How can both be achieved?" Thinking in this way, the infinite Hari decided and entered the mouth. The gods who were hidden in the clouds shrieked in fear. Kamsa and others and demons who were Agha's friends rejoiced. The illustrious and undecaying Krishna heard this. It desired to crush him, the children and the calves. However, inside its throat, he swiftly enlarged his size. That gigantic being's breath of life was restricted. Its eyes popped out and rolled around here and there. All the breathing was completely restricted. The breath of life shattered the crown of life and emerged outside. All the breath of life emerged outside. The illustrious one glanced at the calves and his well-wishers, who were dead, and brought them back to life. With them, Mukunda again came out through the mouth. An extraordinary and large radiance rose up from the serpent's body. Through its own resplendence, it illuminated the ten directions. It waited in the sky for the lord to emerge. While all the residents of heaven looked on, it then entered his person. All of them were extremely delighted that their own task had been accomplished. They worshipped him by showering down flowers. Celestial *apsara*s danced. Divine musicians played on musical instruments. *Brahmana*s praised him. Everyone recited chants of victory. There were wonderful prayers and excellent music and singing. There were sounds of victory and festivities, with auspicious tones. Hearing this, Aja soon approached the spot. He saw the lord's glory and was filled with amazement. O king! The wonderful skin of the python was dried. It was kept in Vrindavana and for many days, the residents of Vraja played inside that cave. Hari's exploit of liberating the serpent and bringing them back

from the dead happened when he was five years old. However, the astounded boys spoke about it in Vraja when he was six years old. This is not astounding. Using his maya, he assumed the form of a human child. He is cause and effect. He is the supreme creator. Through his touch, even Agha was cleansed of his sins. The wicked find it extremely difficult to obtain him and be identified with him. [12] It is only if one's mind is immersed in him, if one is devoted to him and if one places his form in the core of one's heart, even once, that one attains this state. One then enjoys eternal bliss. He destroys all maya. What need be said of one [13] who is inside him?'

Suta said, [14] 'O brahmanas! Devadatta [15] heard this wonderful account about his own protector, the Yadava. Controlling his mind, he again asked Vyasa's son about the sacred account.'

The king said, 'O brahmana! What explains the gap in time that occurred then? Hari performed his act when he was five years old, but the boys spoke about it in his sixth year. O great yogi! O preceptor! Tell me about this. I have a great curiosity. This must indeed be Hari's maya and nothing else. O preceptor! We are the most fortunate in the world. Though we are *kshatra-bandhu*s, [16] from your mouth, we have repeatedly been drinking the true and sacred account about Krishna's immortal stories.'

Suta said, 'O supreme among devotees of the illustrious one! Badarayana's son was thus asked. As he remembered Ananta in his heart, he lost control of all his senses. With great deal of effort, he slowly regained his external senses and replied.'

Chapter 10(13)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O immensely fortunate one! O supreme among those who are devoted to the illustrious one! You have asked a good question. Hearing repeatedly about the lord's account, you bring new and newer attachment to them. There are those who are virtuous, naturally assimilating the essence and meaning of Achyuta's sacred accounts with their speech, ears and minds at every moment and bringing newer attachment, like disso-

lute men addicted to women. O king! Hear attentively the secret I will tell you. Preceptors can speak about secret things to disciples they love. The illustrious one saved the calves and their protectors [17] from death in the form of Agha's mouth. He brought them to the sandy banks of the river and spoke to them. "O friends! This sandy bank of the river is extremely beautiful. It is covered with soft and clean sand and has everything required for us to play. There are blooming lotuses and the banks have enchanting trees, the fragrance drawing bees and birds, whose calls are echoing. Let us eat here. Most of the day has passed and we are afflicted by hunger. Let the calves drink water and graze slowly near us, on the grass." The boys agreed. After the calves had drunk, they tethered them, so that they could graze on the green pasture. With the illustrious one, they cheerfully undid their pouches and started to eat. They sat around Krishna in concentric circles and faced him. The boys from Vraja possessed beautiful faces and their eyes were opened wide. They sat with him in that beautiful forest region, just as the stamen of a lotus is surrounded by whorls. For vessels to eat out of, some used bunches of flowers. Others used sprouts, leaves and fruits. Some used their pouches, barks of trees or stones. Showing each other, they separately ate what each of them had brought. They laughed and made the others laugh. With the lord, they ate what others had brought. Those in the world of heaven looked on at the enjoyer of sacrifices enjoying himself in childish pastimes. He [18] tucked in his flute between his stomach and the garment at his waist. The horn and the cane were under his left arm. He placed the lovely food and fruits in his hands and picked up mouthfuls with his fingers. He was in their midst, surrounded by his well-wishers. He laughed and played with his own friends. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! With their souls in Achyuta, they and the calves ate. Desiring grass, the calves strayed far away, inside the forest. On seeing this, they were scared. Krishna is the one who causes fright to all kinds of terror. He pacified his friends and said, "Do not stop. [19] I will bring the calves back here." Having said this, with the morsel of food still in his hands, the illustrious Krishna left. He searched for his own calves and those of the others in mountains, caves, bushes and thickets.

‘O extender of the Kuru lineage! Earlier, the one born from the lotus [20] had remained in the sky and had witnessed his powers in liberating Agha. He had been filled with great wonder. With his heart immersed in him, he now wished to see the lord’s maya and other glory as a child. Therefore, he stole the calves and the cowherd boys. He took them to some other spot, remaining invisible. Krishna couldn’t see the calves on the sandy bank or the forest. Nor did he see the cowherd boys. He searched in every direction. The one who knows about everything in the universe couldn’t see the calves or the cowherd boys in the forest. He instantly understood that everything had been done by the creator. Krishna, the lord who is the creator of the universe, desired to bring pleasure to him and to the mothers. [21] Therefore, he expanded himself. [22] He became exactly like the cowherd boys and exactly like the small forms of the calves. He became exactly like their sticks, horns, flutes, wreaths and pouches. He became exactly like their ornaments and garments. He assumed their exact forms, conduct, qualities and features, the exact ways they played. Aja [23] assumed all their forms, their words and their limbs. Everything is permeated by Vishnu. He is his own *atman* and manifested himself as the calves and the cowherd boys. The one who is in all atmans thus played and sported with his own atman and entered Vraja in this way. He took those separate calves and placed them in their respective pens. O king! Assuming their forms, [24] he entered their respective homes. On hearing the respective flutes, the respective mothers quickly arose. They embraced them in their arms. Without feeling their weights, they raised them up. Because of the love, milk oozed out of their breasts, like nectar and *asava*. [25] Taking the supreme brahman to be their own sons, they fed him. O king! Thereafter, they massaged them and bathed them, smearing them with unguents. They decorated them with ornaments and protected them. [26] They applied *tilaka* [27] and fed them. Thus tended to, Madhava delighted them with his own conduct. One *yama* [28] passed into another yama and evening arrived. Soon, the cows reached the pens. With the sounds of bellowing, they summoned their respective calves and fed them the milk that flowed from their udders, repeatedly licking them. As mothers, the love of the cows and the *gopi*s [29] increased, even more than

was the case before. Because of Hari's maya, they didn't realize their sons were missing. [30] For the residents of Vraja, the affection they had towards their own sons gradually increased from one day to another day and became limitless. For Krishna, it was the same as before. [31] This continued for a year. In this way, the one who is his own atman manifested himself in the form of the calves and the cowherd boys. He passed a year in this way, protecting and playing as the cowherd boys in the forest and in the pens.

'Once, along with Rama, Aja entered the forest, tending to the calves. Five or six nights were left for an entire year to be over. Once, the cows were grazing on grass on the summit of Mount Govardhana. From a distance, they saw their calves grazing near Vraja. On seeing them, they were filled with affection and forgot themselves. That herd of cows rushed down difficult paths that were difficult for their protectors to follow. They moved down like bipeds. Their necks were drawn back towards their humps and their tails were raised. They bellowed and with milk flowing from their udders, they swiftly headed down. At the foot of the hill, the cows greeted the calves, as if they had just been born and fed them milk. With milk flowing from their udders, they licked them, as if they would swallow them up. The gopas were unable to prevent their cows from meeting their calves. Frustrated, they were both ashamed and angry. With difficulty, they descended along those impassable paths and saw the cows, the calves and their sons. As soon as they saw their sons, a great affection resulted. They were overwhelmed with love and the rage was gone. They embraced them in their arms and inhaled the fragrances of their heads. They were filled with great delight. The aged gopas were delighted to meet their sons. With great effort, they gradually withdrew from those embraces. They withdrew. However, remembering their sons, they continued to shed tears. [32] Rama witnessed this constant increase in love in Vraja, even among those who had been weaned. [33] He reflected on the possible reason. "What is this extraordinary incident of love towards children increasing in Vraja, just as it does towards Vasudeva, who is in all atmans? I am no exception. This has never happened before. What is this and where has it come from? Has it come from a goddess, a woman or an asura lady? It must be my master's [34] maya. Who

else can confound me?" Dasharha [35] thought about this. Then, using the wisdom of his vision, he saw that all the calves and his friends were nothing but Vaikuntha. "O lord! These [36] are not the lords of the gods or *rishi*s. They are you manifesting yourself in these different forms. How have you come to appear in these distinct forms?" Thus asked, the lord explained briefly and Bala understood.

'The one who created himself [37] returned after one *truti* [38] had elapsed by his own measurement of time. However, by human measures, it was one year and he saw that all of them were playing with Hari. "I made all the boys and all the calves in Gokula go to sleep on my bed of maya and they have still not woken up. Who are these and where have they come from? They are not the same as those who have been confounded by my maya. These are similar to those in number and have been playing with Vishnu for an entire year." The one who created himself thought for a long time, trying to differentiate between the two lots. He tried to distinguish between the real and the unreal ones, but was unable to. Vishnu can never be confounded and is the one who confounds the universe. Yet, having tried to confound him by using his maya, he ended up being confounded himself. The darkness of mist is absorbed in the darkness of the night. The light of a firefly disappears in the light of the day. Like that, a greater maya destroys any attempt by inferior maya. While Aja [39] looked on, all the cowherd boys were instantly seen to assume the dark complexion of clouds. They were attired in yellow silk garments. They were four-armed, holding a conch shell, a *chakra*, a club and a lotus in their hands. They wore diadems and earrings and wore necklaces made out of wild flowers. There were marks of *shrivatsa*, armlets, jewels around their necks and bracelets on their hands. Like conch shells, their necks were marked with three lines. There were beautiful anklets and bangles, girdles and rings on the fingers. From the heads to the feet, on all the limbs, the bodies were decorated with garlands of fresh and delicate *tulasi* leaves, sacred offerings rendered by large numbers of devotees. The smiles were as dazzling as the moonlight. There were sidelong glances from reddened eyes. They seemed to be the creators and preservers of their own devotees, using *sattva* and *rajas*. [40] All mobile and immobile

embodied forms, beginning with the one who created himself and ending with a blade of grass, stood around separately and separately worshipped them with singing, dancing and many objects of worship. There were *anima* and the other powers. [41] There were Aja and other personified forms. They were surrounded by the twenty-four *tattva*s, [42] Mahat and the others. There were time, nature, *samskara*s, [43] *kama, karma* and the *guna*s. [44] With their own greatness subsumed in his greatness, they worshipped him in personified forms. All of them were manifestations of the same single truth and knowledge, the bliss of Ananta. His great glory could not be comprehended even by those who possessed the insight of the Upanishads. At the same instant, Aja saw everything in the *paramatman brahman*. It is his radiance that illuminates everything, mobile and immobile. [45] Aja's eleven senses [46] were curious, but were astounded, stupefied and overwhelmed. He stood there silent, like the image of a minor divinity in the presence of a greater divinity. He [47] manifests himself and his own greatness is beyond debate. He is beyond all nature and beyond sacred texts that place negative rejection at the forefront. [48] The lord cannot be conceived in this way. On seeing him, the lord of speech [49] was confused and exclaimed, "What is this?" Immediately understanding the state Aja was in, the supreme one removed the curtain from Aja's mind. [50] At this, Kah's [51] external vision was restored. He stood up, like a man who has arisen from the dead. He opened his eyes with great difficulty and saw everything, including himself. He immediately looked around in all the directions and saw Vrindavana standing in front of him, filled with trees and other agreeable objects that people could subsist on. This is a place where men and animals live together, forgetting their natural enmity. Because the unvanquished one resides there, they are like friends. Anger, desire and other vices have immediately left the spot. The supreme Ananta, infinite in his understanding, was acting out a role in a play, as a child born in a family of those who earn a living from animals. [52] Without any sense of duality, Parameshthi Brahma saw him there. As was the case earlier, he was alone, with a morsel of food in his hand, searching everywhere for the calves and his friends. Seeing this, he instantly descended from his mount. [53] He lay down and prostrated his body on the ground,

like a golden staff. He touched his two feet with the crests of his four diadems. [54] Bowing down, with tears of joy, he sprinkled his feet. He then arose. But he again fell down at Krishna's feet for a long period of time. He repeatedly remembered the greatness that he had witnessed earlier. Thereafter, he slowly arose and wiped his eyes. With his shoulders bowed, he glanced towards Mukunda. He humbly joined his hands in salutation. He controlled himself. With his body trembling and in a faltering tone, he praised him in these words.'

Chapter 10(14)

'Brahma said, "O one who should be worshipped! I bow down before you. Your form is like that of a dark cloud and your garments are like tinges of lightning. You are ornamented with gunja seeds and peacock feathers. Your face is dazzling. You wear a garland made out of wild flowers. You have a morsel of food in your hand and a cane and flute are tucked in. Your gentle feet bear the auspicious marks. I bow down before the son of the herder of animals. O lord! As a favour to me, you have yourself revealed this form of yours, which does not consist of the elements. Even though I am Kah, using all my mental faculties, I am unable to comprehend your measure. How can I comprehend the truth that you are, not to speak of the bliss that you yourself feel? There are virtuous ones who survive, extolling your conduct and your account with their mouths. With all knowledge and efforts, they bow down before you and surrender themselves. They remain in those positions, retaining what they have heard with their bodies, words and minds. You cannot be conquered by the three worlds. However, you are generally conquered by them. [55] O lord! Benefit is ensured along the path of devotion towards you. However, there are those who suffer and deviate from this, seeking to understand only by resorting to knowledge. They are those who pound empty husks from which the grain has been taken out. Nothing but hardship remains for them. O lord! In earlier times, there were many yogis in this world. They offered their efforts and their deeds to you

and obtained knowledge through devotion and hearing about your accounts. O Achyuta! They easily obtained the supreme destination with you. O lord! It is possible to understand the greatness of your qualities and your glory if one is unblemished in one's mind and one's atman. [56] You are self-illuminating and beyond any kind of form or illumination. You are without transformations. You can only be comprehended through self-perception and not through any other means. All the gunas are in you, but who is able to enumerate your qualities? You descend for the sake of ensuring welfare. In the course of time, accomplished people can count the particles of dust on earth, the number of dewdrops in the sky and the number of stellar bodies in the firmament. But who can enumerate you? If a person eagerly waits for your compassion, he can enjoy the fruits of what he has done. He must bow down before you, surrendering his heart, his words and his body. If he lives in this way, he becomes entitled to a status of emancipation. O lord! O Ananta! O original being! O *paramatman*! [57] Behold me, the ignoble one. You are full of maya. Yet, desiring to see your powers, I sought to envelope you in my maya. Indeed, what am I? In comparison to an entire fire, I am nothing more than a spark. O Achyuta! Therefore, pardon me. I have been born out of rajas. I did not know. I was insolent and prided myself on being a distinct controller. O Aja! My vision was blinded and I was enveloped in the blinding darkness of ignorance. I think that you are my protector. Therefore, you must show me your compassion. Who am I? I am covered in sheaths of tamas, Mahat, *ahamkara*, [58] space, air, fire, water and earth, in an egg that is the universe and surrounded by seven sheaths. What about someone like you? Like *paramanu*s, [59] innumerable such eggs [60] flow in and out from the pores of your body, like particles of dust. That is your greatness. O Adhokshaja! When a foetus in the womb uses its legs to kick, does the mother take offence? O Ananta! Is there anything, existent or non-existent, that is not inside your stomach? When the three worlds are destroyed, there is a cosmic flood and an ocean of water. Aja emerged from a lotus that sprouted out of Narayana's navel. There is no falsehood in this statement. O lord! Therefore, have I not been generated out of you? You are Narayana. You are in the atmans of all living beings. You are the lord of all the worlds

and you are the witness. Narayana is one of your forms. Everything emerged from the water. It is not true that you lay down on the waters. [61] That too is your maya. O illustrious one! If your form, the refuge of the universe, was lying down in the water, why could I not see it then? Why couldn't I properly see you within my heart then? Why was it the case that I suddenly saw it? [62] O one who dispels maya! In the present *avatara*, you used your maya to manifest to your mother everything that exists outside, inside your stomach. [63] Along with me, everything outside was shown inside your stomach. That is exactly what has occurred now. Without your maya, how is this possible? Today, has your maya not shown me that there is nothing other than you? Initially, you were alone. [64] Later, you were there with all the friends and calves from Vraja. After this, you appeared in all the numerous four-armed forms worshipped by me and all the others. You then appeared as the innumerable universes. You are the ultimate brahman and you do not have a second. To those who are ignorant of your status, you appear in forms other than the atman. However, your atman manifests itself in your extensive maya. In creating, you appear like me. In preserving the universe, you appear like your own self. In destruction, it is you who appear as the three-eyed one. [65] O lord! It is you who appear among the gods, the rishis and men. [66] Though you do not take birth, you appear among inferior species and aquatic creatures. O lord! O creator! You take birth to subdue the insolence of the wicked and to show your compassion towards those you favour. O lord! O illustrious one! O paramatman! O lord of *yoga*! In the three worlds, you spread your *yoga maya* and sport. Who can possibly know where, how, how many times, and when? This entire universe is unreal. It is like a dream, when the intelligence is shrouded. It is full of unhappiness and more unhappiness. All of it appears in you. You are always happiness, knowledge and infinite. Arising out of your maya, it appears as if it is real. You are the single atman, the ancient Purusha. You are truth. You are self-luminiscent. You are infinite. You are the original being. You are eternal and without decay. You are without birth and unlimited in your bliss. You are without any blemishes. You are complete, without a second. You are free from all obstructions. You are immortal. You are in all atmans.

Those who are learned hold this view. They see you as the atman that is superior to their own atmans. They obtain this insight from the Upanishads, through preceptors who are like the sun. Using this, they can cross this ocean of life, which is unreal. There are those who do not understand the nature of the atman. All perception of material objects results from this ignorance. Once there is knowledge, it vanishes. This is like the appearance and disappearance of a rope and a snake. The bondage of *samsara* [67] and emancipation are two terms that result from ignorance. This difference is not true and it results from lack of knowledge. One should consider only the paramatman, unimpeded in consciousness. There will no longer be a difference, just as there is no night and day in the sun. The ignorance of the ignorant is pitiable. You are the paramatman and they regard you as something distinct from their own atmans. They thus search for you outside their own selves. O Ananta! You are inside. Virtuous people reject any sense of difference and search you out inside. Virtuous people, virtuous in qualities, must first reject the unreal snake, [68] before identifying the real. O god! If a person is favoured so that he obtains even a trifling touch of your two lotus feet, he knows the truth about the illustrious one's greatness. However, another person, who searches for a very long time, cannot obtain it. O protector! In this birth and in the next, even if that is as an inferior species, may I have the great fortune of being one of your devotees. May I be able to serve at your tender feet. The cows and women of Vraja are extremely fortunate. O lord! You have happily drunk the nectar of milk at their breasts, in the form of calves and their own sons. All the sacrifices undertaken by them till now have not been able to satisfy them as much. How wonderful is the fortune of Nanda and the gopas who reside in Vraja. The eternal and complete brahman, [69] the reservoir of supreme bliss, is their friend. O Achyuta! Though their fortune and glory are great, the eleven of us have also been great in our fortune. [70] Using the senses as cups, Sharva and the others have repeatedly drunk the nectar from your lotus feet and it has been like honey and amrita. The greatest fortune is to be born, as whatever species, in the forest where Gokula is, or to be bathed by dust from the feet of someone from Gokula. For them, their entire lives are nothing but the illustrious Mukunda.

Even now, the sacred *shruti* texts search out the dust from his feet. O god! Thinking about any fruit that is superior to you, I am confused. You are the one who confers all the fruits in the universe. O god! By just pretending to be good, [71] Putana and her family were brought to you. For those who reside in this pasture, their homes, wealth, friends, beloved relatives, bodies, children, their breath of life and their minds are devoted to you. What else can you possibly give them? O Krishna! Until people do not become devoted to you, their attachments and other desires are like thieves and make their homes like prisons, where the delusion is like shackles on the feet. O lord! You have nothing to do with the material. But you appear on the surface of the earth and identify with the material, so as to increase different kinds of pleasure among people who seek refuge with you. There are those who think they know you. O lord! Let them know. There is no need for me to say a lot on this. In mind, form and words, your greatness is beyond my comprehension. O Krishna! O omniscient one! O one who witnesses everything! Grant me permission to leave. You are the protector of the universe. Nevertheless, I offer this universe to you. O Shri-Krishna! The lineage of the Vrishnis is like a lotus and you are the one who brings pleasure to it. You are the one who enhances the prosperity of the gods, the earth, brahmanas, animals and the oceans. You are the one who dispels the darkness of *adharma*. You are the enemy of the rakshasas on earth. O one who should be worshipped! O illustrious one! Till the end of the *kalpa* [72] and as long as the sun shines, I bow down to you.”’

Shri-Shuka said, ‘The creator of the universe [73] praised the lord in this way. He bowed down at his feet and circumambulated him thrice. He then returned to his own desired abode. After granting Svayambhu permission, the illustrious one brought the original calves back to the sandy bank, where his friends were, just as they had been before. O king! He was the lord of their lives and in the inner cores of their atmans. Though they had been separated from him for an entire year, because of Krishna’s maya, they thought that it had only been half a kshana. Indeed, if the intelligence is confounded by his maya, what does one not forget in this world? He constantly confounds the entire universe and makes one forget one’s own self. The well-

wishers welcomed Krishna and said, "You have returned quickly. We have not eaten a single morsel. It is best that we should eat together." Hrishikesha laughed and, along with the boys, ate. When they were returning from the forest to Vraja, he showed them the python's skin. His body was adorned with peacock feathers, flowers and many kinds of minerals from the forest. There was the great sound of flutes, whistles made out of leaves and horns, as if there was a festival. He called out to the calves and they chanted about his sacred deeds. In the midst of the festivities, enhancing the delight of the gopis, he entered the settlement of cowherds. Having gone to Vraja, the boys chanted, "This one, the son of Yashoda and Nanda, has killed a giant serpent today and has saved us."'

The king asked, 'O brahmana! How could there have been this love for Krishna? This is unprecedented. This kind of love doesn't exist for one's own son, not to speak of a person who is someone else's son. Please speak about this.'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'O king! Among all creatures, one's own self is loved the most. Everything else, children, wealth and other things are loved because they belong to one's own self. O Indra among kings! Each embodied being loves his own respective self. Sons, wealth, homes and other things are loved because of the sense of ownership. O supreme among royals! For people who identify with the body, there is nothing that is loved as much as the body and everything else follows. If a person considers the body as "mine" and not as "me", it will not be loved that much. Even when the body decays, the desire to be alive remains strong. Therefore, for all embodied beings, his own atman should be loved the most. All mobile and immobile objects in the universe are for that purpose alone. Know that Krishna is the atman who exists in the atmans of all embodied beings. For the welfare of the universe, he uses his maya and appears in the form of an embodied being. There are those who know all mobile and immobile objects in this world as Krishna. Everything is a form of the illustrious one and there is nothing other than him. For every object that exists, the existence depends on the cause. But the illustrious Krishna is the cause behind all causes. Therefore, there is nothing that is distinct from him. His lotus

feet are like a boat. Murari [74] is auspicious and famous. He is the great destination. Those who resort to his feet cross over the ocean of samsara, as if it is a puddle, [75] and reach the supreme destination. At every step, they do not face any dangers. I have thus told you everything that you asked me about this. Hari did this when he was five years old, but it was not talked about until he was six years old. This was Murari's conduct with his well-wishers, his meal on the pasture and his slaying of Agha. His form, superior to the manifest one, was thus extolled and praised by Aja. A man who hears about it, or chants it, obtains everything that he desires. This is the way those two [76] played as children. As children, this is the way they spent their time in Vraja. They played hide-and-seek, built bridges and leapt over them like monkeys.'

Chapter 10(15)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Those two attained the age of *pouganda* in Vraja. [77] They were then approved as the tenders of animals. [78] Along with their friends, they herded cows and the marks of their feet made Vrindavana auspicious. On one occasion, along with Bala, Madhava was playing on his flute. He was surrounded by gopas who chanted about his fame. With the animals in front of him, he entered a blossoming forest, to sport there and to find pasture for the animals. It was full of beautiful sounds created by bees, animals and birds. There were pools of water, as clean as the minds of great people. There was a breeze that was fragrant with the scent of lotuses. On seeing this, the illustrious one's mind turned to enjoying himself. He saw the beauty of the red and delicate foliage. The tops of the branches of trees were laden with flowers and fruits and seemed to bend down, wishing to touch his feet. Seeing this, the original being was delighted. He smiled and spoke to his elder brother.

'The illustrious one said, "O supreme among gods! This is wonderful. Your lotus feet are worshipped by the immortals. On their own, the tops of the branches are bowing down at your feet and offering flowers and fruits to

you. They will thus destroy the darkness that has led to their being born as trees. O one who is a *tirtha* [79] for all the worlds! The wind is singing about your fame. O original being! It is following you and worshipping you at every step. They are probably large numbers of sages who are prominent among your devotees. O unblemished one! Even though you have hidden yourself in the forest, you are their divinity and they are not abandoning you. O one who should be worshipped! The peacocks are rejoicing and are worshipping you. With loving glances, like gopis, the does are greeting you. With hymns, large numbers of cuckoos are welcoming your arrival in their homes. These residents of the forest are fortunate. Their nature is like that of virtuous people. The earth is fortunate today and so are the grass and plants, because they have touched your feet. The trees and creepers have been touched by your hands. You have cast compassionate glances towards the rivers, the mountains, the birds and the animals. You have embraced the gopis between your arms, a spot that is desired by Shri."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'Krishna's mind was delighted at the beauty of Vrindavana and with the animals. Near the mountain, [80] the animals grazed along the banks of the river and with his followers, he himself sported. Sometimes, wearing garlands, he sang along with Samkarshana, when the bees, intoxicated with the honey, buzzed. Sometimes, he imitated the joyous notes of the swans. Sometimes, he danced, mimicking the dancing of the peacocks and causing laughter. His voice rumbled like the deep thunder of the clouds. Sometimes, by name, he cheerfully called out to animals that had strayed far away. This brought pleasure to the minds of the cows and the cowherd boys. He imitated the tones of *chakora*s, *krouncha*s, *chakravaka*s, *bharadvaja*s, peacocks and other creatures. [81] Sometimes, he seemed to be scared of tigers and lions. Sometimes, he would be exhausted from playing and like a gopa, would lie down, using a gopa's lap as a pillow. When he had himself rested, he would tend to his elder brother by massaging his feet and doing other things. Sometimes, the cowherd boys sang and danced. They moved around, pretending to fight with each other. Holding each other's hands, those two laughed and applauded these activities. Sometimes, he would be exhausted from the wrestling. He would make beds out of tender

leaves and lie down near the roots of trees. Like a gopa, he would use another gopa's lap as a pillow. Some massaged the great-souled one's feet. Others, cleansed of all sin, fanned him with fans. O great king! Others gently sang delightful songs that were appropriate for the great-souled one, their minds filled with affection for him. His progress is mysterious and using his own maya, he was born as the son of a gopa and enacted out an appropriate kind of conduct. His tender feet had been attended to by Rama. However, like a villager, he enjoyed himself with other villagers. On some occasions, he acted like the lord.

'There was a cowherd named Sridama and he was Rama and Keshava's friend. Full of affection, he spoke to Subala, Stoka, Krishna and the other gopas. "O Rama! O mighty-armed one! O Rama! O Krishna! O destroyer of the wicked! Not very far from here, there is an extremely large forest and it is full of rows of palm trees. A large number of fruits have fallen down there and continue to fall down. However, those are all seized by the evil-souled Dhenuka. O Rama! O Krishna! He is an asura and has descended here in the form of a donkey. He is surrounded by many of his other relatives, who are exactly like him in strength. O slayer of enemies! He has eaten humans. Therefore, humans are terrified of him. The large number of animals don't go there either and the place is avoided by flocks of birds. There is fragrant fruit there and we have never tasted anything like that earlier. It is that fragrant scent that is spreading everywhere and it can be felt here too. O Krishna! Our minds are tempted because of that fragrance and there is a great desire. Give us those fruits. O Rama! If it so pleases you, let us go there." Hearing the words of their well-wisher, those two wanted to bring pleasure to their well-wishers. Therefore, surrounded by the gopas, those two lords went to the forest of palm trees. Bala entered and started to shake the palm trees with his arms. Like a crazy elephant in his energy, he made the fruits fall down. The asura that was in the form of a donkey heard the sound of the fruits falling down. He rushed towards the spot, making the surface of the ground and the trees tremble. The powerful one met Bala and struck him on the chest with his two hind legs. Emitting sounds of braying, the deceitiful one then withdrew a bit. O king! The donkey approached

again and stood there, with his face turned away. Standing on two legs, he angrily struck out with his hind legs towards Bala. He seized both of those hind legs in one hand. He whirled him around and hurled him on the top of a tree, so that he lost his life. Struck in this way, the large top of that huge palm tree trembled. It shattered and made another next to it tremble. That too broke and made an adjoining one tremble. So it went on. As a result of Bala's playing, the palm tree was struck by the donkey's dead body. All of them started to tremble, as if they had been struck by a gigantic storm. Since he is the illustrious Ananta, the lord of the universe, this is not extraordinary. O dear one! Like the warp and the woof of a piece of woven cloth, the entire universe is woven into him. There were other relatives of Dhenuka. With their relative having been killed, all of them angrily attacked Krishna and Rama. O king! As they descended, Krishna and Rama toyed with them. They seized them by their hind legs and flung them on the tops of the trees. The earth was resplendent, covered with heaps of fallen fruit, the tops of trees and the dead bodies of *daitya*s. It resembled the sky, covered with clouds. The gods and the others heard about this extremely great deed. They showered down flowers, played on musical instruments and uttered words of praise. Thereafter, having lost their fear, humans ate the fruit of palm trees. With Dhenuka having been killed, animals grazed on the grass in that forest. The lotus-eyed Krishna's account is one that is auspicious to hear. Praised and followed by the gopas, along with his elder brother, he returned to Vraja.

'The locks of his hair were covered with dust raised by cows and peacock feathers were stuck to them. He was adorned with wild flowers. His eyes were beautiful and his smile was enchanting. He played tunes on his flute, while his companions followed him and sung about his glory. The gopis wished to see him. They assembled and came forward to greet him. Their eyes were as dark as bees and with these, they drank in the nectar of Mukunda's face. During the day, the women of Vraja suffered from the heat of being separated from him and this was dissipated in the evening. Accepting all the honours, he entered the settlement of cowherds. The women cast sidelong glances at him, full of bashful and modest smiles. Yashoda and

Rohini were devoted to their sons. Appropriate to the occasion, they pronounced the best of desired benedictions on their two sons. They were tired after the journey. They were bathed and massaged. They were attired in beautiful lower garments and decorated with divine garlands and fragrances. They ate the tasty food that was given to them by the two mothers. After being fondled by them, they lay down on the best of beds and happily slept in Vraja.

'In this way, the illustrious Krishna roamed around in Vrindavana. O king! On one occasion, without Rama, but surrounded by his friends, he went to the Kalindi. The cows and the cowherds suffered from the heat of the summer. Afflicted by thirst, they drank the water, though it was contaminated by poison. Because of destiny, they lost their senses and touched that poisoned water. O extender of the Kuru lineage! Losing their lives, all of them fell down at the edge of that water. Krishna, the lord of all the lords of yoga, saw them there in that state. His glance is like a shower of amrita to those whom he protects and they were brought back to life. Regaining their memories, they arose, at the edge of that water. All of them were extremely surprised and looked at each other. O king! They decided that this must have been because of Govinda's compassionate glances. Despite having drunk poison and died, it was as if they had arisen on their own.'

Chapter 10(16)

Shri-Shuka said, 'The lord Krishna saw that the Yamuna [82] had been contaminated by the dark serpent. Desiring to purify it, he exiled the serpent.'

The king asked, 'O brahmana! Inside the fathomless waters, how did the illustrious one subdue the serpent? How had it lived there for so many *yuga*s? Tell us. O brahmana! The illustrious lord conducts himself as he wills. The generous one conducted himself as a cowherd. How can one be satisfied with hearing about this amrita?'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'There was a pool inside Kalindi. [83] Kaliya resided there and there was fire in its poison. Therefore, the water boiled and even

birds flying through the air fell down into it. Drops of that poisonous water mixed with the breeze, and anyone on the banks, mobile or immobile, who touched it, died. The poison was terrible in its energy and power. Krishna had assumed an avatara to subdue the wicked. He saw that the river had been contaminated. He climbed an extremely tall *kadamba* tree. He girded his loins and slapped his arms. He leapt into the poisoned water. The supreme Purusha descended into the serpent's pool with great force. The mass of water, poisoned with the serpent's breath was agitated and overflowed up to an extent of one hundred lengths of a bow. For someone whose valour is unlimited, this wasn't surprising. O dear one! He sported in the pool and made the water swirl with the strength of his arms. His valour was like that of a supreme elephant. There was a roar. Hearing this, it decided that someone had invaded its own abode. Unable to tolerate this, Chakshushrava [84] issued forth. It saw him, delicate and as dazzling as a cloud. He had the shrivatsa mark and was attired in yellow garments. There was a beautiful smile on his face. With feet like the inside of a lotus, he was playing, without any kind of fear. Seeing him, the serpent angrily entwined him in its coils and bit his inner organs. He was enveloped in the serpent's coils and no signs of movement could be seen. On seeing this, his beloved friends, the protectors of the animals, were extremely miserable. They had surrendered themselves, their relatives, their wealth, their wives and their desires to Krishna. Overcome by misery, repentance and fear and their intelligence dulled, they fell down. Bulls, cows and heifers [85] were extremely saddened and shrieked. Terrified, they stood there and glanced towards Krishna, as if they were crying. There were three kinds of extremely terrible portents in Vraja—those on earth, those in the firmament and those in the bodies of creatures, announcing impending danger. Noticing this, the gopas, with Nanda at the forefront, were anxious with fear. They learnt that, without Rama, Krishna had taken the cows out to graze. Not knowing about him, from these portents, they formed the view that he had come about his destruction. Their lives and their minds were immersed in him and they were afflicted by grief, sorrow and fear. O dear one! Surrounded by the animals, the young, the aged and the women emerged from Gokula. They were

distressed, driven by the desire to see Krishna. The illustrious Madhava Bala saw that they were miserable. He knew about his younger brother's prowess. However, he smiled a little and did not say anything. They looked for their beloved Krishna and searched out his trail. Following the marks of the illustrious one through his footprints, they went to the banks of the Yamuna. O dear one! Here and there, along the path, interspersed with the footprints of cows and other animals, they saw the lord's footprints, with the marks of a lotus, barley, an elephant goad, the *vajra* and a standard. Looking at this, they advanced swiftly. From a distance, they saw Krishna inside the pool, enveloped in the coils of the serpent inside the water. Surrounded by their animals, the gopas lost their senses. Filled with great lassitude and afflicted, they wept. The minds of the gopis were devoted to the illustrious Ananta. They remembered his affectionate smiles, glances and words. Since their beloved had been grasped by the serpent, they were extremely distressed and tormented. Deprived of their beloved, they glanced towards the three worlds as if they were empty. Tears of grief flowed down and they suffered as much as Krishna's mother did. But they held her back from following her son. [86] With their eyes fixed on Krishna's face, they seemed to be dead. They recited to her beloved accounts from Vraja. The illustrious Rama knew about Krishna's sentiments. He saw that Nanda and the others, whose lives were immersed in Krishna, were entering the pool and restrained them.

'Gokula had no recourse other than him. He saw that it was in this state, with the women and the children extremely miserable on his account. He followed the conduct of mortals and remained in that position for a *muhurta*. [87] Then he rose up from the serpent's bonds. He expanded his own body and crushed the serpent's body with his. The serpent abandoned him and enraged, raised its hood high. It stood there, breathing poison heavily through its nostrils. Its immobile eyes were like two frying pans with torches in them and using these, it looked towards Hari. It licked the corners of its mouth with its forked tongue. Its fiery sight was filled with virulent poison. Like the Indra among the birds, [88] he played with it. It also moved around, waiting for an opportunity to strike. As it kept wheeling around

with a raised hood, its energy was exhausted. The original being made it lower its stout hood and climbed atop it. Touching the heap of jewels on its hood, his lotus feet turned coppery red. The original preceptor of all kinds of arts started to dance. The *gandharva*s, [89] the Siddhas, the sages, the *charana*s, [90] the gods and the wives of the gods saw that he was ready to dance. They were delighted and quickly assembled, with flowers and other gifts, sounding drums, kettledrums, tambourines and other musicial instruments, and singing. O dear one! It possessed one hundred and one hoods. Whenever one of these hoods would not bow down, the one who wields a harsh staff would strike it with his feet and make it bend down. As it was whirled around, it started to vomit blood through its mouth and its nostrils. The serpent suffered from great misery. Poisonous waste oozed out of its eyes. Sometimes, an angry hood would rise up, and enraged, breathe heavily. Whenever this happened, he danced and pressed it down with his feet. The ancient Purusha was worshipped with flowers that were showered down on him. O king! The hoods were like umbrellas and that violent dance crushed them. With its body shattered, it started to vomit copious quantities of blood from its mouth. It remembered the ancient Purusha, the preceptor of mobile and immobile objects. In its mind, it went and sought shelter with Narayana. The universe is inside Krishna's stomach. Its hoods were like umbrellas and they were shattered from the blows of his feet and it suffered from his extremely heavy load. Seeing this, the serpent's wives approached the original being. Their garments and ornaments were disarrayed and the braids of their hair were dishevelled. Their minds were extremely anxious and they placed their sons in front of them. They prostrated their bodies on the ground and bowed down to the lord of creatures. Those virtuous wives of a wicked husband joined their hands in salutation. Desiring to save his life, they sought refuge with the one who provides shelter.

'The wives of the serpent said, "This one has committed a crime and this punishment is proper. You assume an avatara for the subjugation of the wicked. You are impartial in your outlook, towards enemies and towards your own sons. You inflict punishment with a view to achieving the fruits. You have shown us your favours. Indeed, when an evil person is punished,

he is cleansed of sin. This embodied being assumed the form of a serpent [91] because he was wicked. Your anger should be revered as a favour. Did he torment himself with extremely difficult austerities in an earlier life? Did he control his insolence and show respect towards others? Did he follow dharma? Did he show compassion towards all beings? You are the source of all living beings and you are now satisfied with him. O god! We do not know what this is the result of. What has granted him the right to touch the dust of your feet? Desiring this, Shri, supreme among women, performed austerities. Giving up all other desire, she was firm in her vows for an extremely long period. Those who have obtained the dust of your lotus feet do not wish for the vault of heaven, the state of being a universal emperor, the position of Parameshthi, sovereignty over earth, siddhis in yoga, or emancipation from the wheel of life. O protector! What this one has achieved is extremely difficult for others to achieve. This lord of serpents was born in a species characterized by tamas and fell prey to anger. Your glory has manifested itself before him, something that embodied beings who whirl around in the wheel of samsara wish for. O illustrious Purusha! O great-souled one! We bow down before you. You reside in all creatures, but you are the supreme cause behind all creatures. You are the paramatman. You are the reservoir of *jnana* and *vijnana*. [92] You are the brahman, infinite in powers. You are without gunas and without transformations. We bow down before the one who controls Prakriti. You are time. You are the one who is the foundation for time. Time is your form. You are the witness. You are the universe. You are the one who witnesses the universe. You are the one who creates the universe. You are the cause behind the universe. Your atman is in the elements, the objects of the senses, the senses, the breaths of life, the mind, the intelligence and the heart. Because of the three gunas and ahamkara, your atman remains hidden from perception. We bow down before the infinite one. We bow down before the subtle one. We bow down before the mysterious one. We bow down before the omniscient one. We bow done before the one who allows many kinds of debates about himself. We bow down to the power of speech and the power of the one speech describes. We bow down before the one who is the foundation of proof. We

bow down before the wise one, the one who is the source of the sacred texts. We bow down before *nivritti* and *pravritti*. [93] We bow down before the one who is the source of *nigama* texts. [94] We bow down to Krishna and Rama, the sons of Vasudeva. We bow down to Pradyumna, Aniruddha and the lord of the Satvatas. We bow down to the one who illuminates the gunas. We bow down to the one who hides the gunas. We bow down to the one who can be discerned from the functioning of the gunas. We bow down to the one who witnesses the gunas. We bow down to the one who reveals himself to his devotees. Your pastimes and deeds are beyond comprehension. You are the one who can be understood as the cause behind everything. We bow down to Hrishikesha. We bow down to the sage. We bow down to the one who is silent in conduct. You are the one who knows about the progress of everything, superior and inferior. We bow down before the one who is the controller of everything. We bow down to the one who is not the universe. We bow down to the one who is the universe. We bow down to the one who is the witness and is also the cause. O lord! Without being involved and without acting, you use the gunas to ensure the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe. You are the one who upholds the prowess of time. You awaken the latent and innate truth. You are the one who acts. Your pastimes and glances are invincible. You are the one who creates the bodies in the three worlds, serene, turbulent and those born as inferior species. However, those who are serene and virtuous are loved by you and you protect them. The reason for your presence in this world is the protection of *dharma*. If his own servant commits a crime only once, a master should pardon it. You are serene in your atman. You should pardon this foolish one, who has committed a crime out of ignorance. O illustrious one! This serpent is about to give up his life. Please show him your favours. The virtuous should grieve over women. Our husband is our life. Give him back to us. We are your servant-maids. Order us. We will abide by your commands. We will faithfully carry everything out. Free us from all kinds of fear.”’

Shri-Shuka continued, ‘The illustrious one was properly praised by the wives of the serpent in this way. He was senseless and his hoods were

crushed, struck by the blows of the feet. He was allowed to escape. Slowly, Kaliya regained his senses and his breath of life. He breathed with a great deal of difficulty. Miserable, he joined his hands in salutation and spoke to Krishna. "We are wicked because of our birth. We are immersed in tamas and our anger is great. O protector! People find it extremely difficult to give up their innate nature, since it grasps those who are evil. O creator! You have created the universe, with its gunas and different characteristics. There are many kinds of nature, valour, energy, species, seeds, hearts and forms. O illustrious one! We are serpents and we are born angry. How can we abandon your maya? You yourself confound us and make it difficult for us to give it up. You are the cause behind this. You are omniscient and the lord of the universe. Whether it is favour or punishment, do what you think is right for us." Behaving in the form of a human being, the illustrious one heard these words and replied. "O serpent! You must not remain in this place. Without any delay, leave for the ocean, with your relatives, children and wives. Let the river be enjoyed by cattle and men. If a mortal person remembers my instruction to you and recounts this at the time of both the *sandhya*s, [95] he will not face any fear on your account. If a person bathes at this spot, where I have played, and offers water to gods and others, if he fasts and remembers me and worships me, he will be freed from all sins. Out of fear on account of Suparna, [96] you left Ramanaka *dvipa* [97] and sought refuge in this pool. However, since you have been marked with my feet, he will not eat you now." O king! The illustrious Krishna, extraordinary in his deeds, freed him in this way. Delighted, the serpent and his wives affectionately worshipped him. They worshipped the protector of the universe with divine garments, garlands, jewels, extremely expensive ornaments, celestial scents and unguents and a large garland of blue lotuses. This pleased the one who has Garuda on his standard. Delighted, they sought his permission, circumambulating and worshipping him. With his wives, well-wishers and sons, he went to the middle of that dvipa. [98] Cleansed of poison, the water of the Yamuna became like amrita. This was because of the favours of the illustrious one, who sported in human form.'

Chapter 10(17)

The king asked, 'Why did Kaliya abandon Ramanaka, the abode of the *naga*s? [99] What did he do so as to make him Suparna's sole enemy?'

Shri-Shuka said, 'O mighty-armed one! Every month, the nagas received a share of offerings from people and it had earlier been agreed that every month, the serpents would leave a share of these at the foot of a large tree. On every new moon day, for the sake of their protection, the nagas would leave a share for the great-souled Suparna. [100] Because of the vigour from his poison, Kaliya, Kadru's son, was filled with insolence. He slighted Garuda by himself eating up the offerings meant for him. O king! Hearing this, the illustrious one, loved by the illustrious one, [101] became angry. Desiring to kill Kaliya, he rushed towards him with an extremely great speed. As he violently descended, he [102] raised his many hoods to strike back, using poison as a weapon. His fangs were his weapons and using these fangs, he bit Suparna. His tongues were terrible. He hissed and his eyes were fierce. Filled with rage, Tarkshya's son repelled him. The one who carried Madhusudana was terrible in his force. Fierce in his valour, he struck Kadru's son with his left wing, which was as dazzling as gold. Struck by Suparna's wing, Kaliya became extremely agitated. He entered Kalindi, which was very difficult to penetrate and he [103] couldn't follow him there. Once, Garuda was hungry and wished to eat an aquatic creature. He was restrained by Soubhari. [104] However, rash and hungry, he seized it. On seeing that the king of the fish had been killed, the fish were extremely miserable and distressed. Full of compassion and to ensure the welfare of those who lived there, Soubhari said, "If Garuda enters this place and eats fish, he will instantly be separated from his life. What I have spoken is the truth." Only Kaliya knew about this great secret. The other serpents didn't know. Therefore, scared of Garuda, he resided there, until Krishna banished him.

'Krishna emerged from the pool, adorned in divine garlands, pastes and garments. He was ornamented with large numbers of extremely expensive jewels, polished with gold. On seeing that he arose and that they had got

him back, all of them seemed to regain their breaths of life and their senses. The cores of the hearts of the gopas rejoiced. Rejoicing, they embraced him. O Kourava! Yashoda, Rohini, Nanda, the gopas and the gopis had been like dried-up trees. Meeting Krishna, they got everything back. Rama knew about Achyuta's powers. Therefore, he embraced him and laughed. The trees, the cows, the bulls and the calves were filled with great joy. Along with their wives, the brahmana preceptors approached Nanda. They said, "After having been devoured by Kaliya, it is good fortune that your son has escaped. Because Krishna has been freed, give gifts to the brahmanas." O king! Happy in his mind, Nanda gave cows and gold. The immensely fortunate and virtuous Yashoda had lost her son and had got him back. Placing him on her lap, she embraced him and repeatedly released torrents of tears from her eyes. O Indra among kings! The residents of Vraja and the cattle suffered from hunger, thirst and exhaustion. They spent the night there, along the banks of the Kalindi.

'At that time, the forest was dry and a forest conflagration started to blaze everywhere in Vraja. While they were sleeping in the night, it enveloped them from all directions and was about to burn them up. Scorched and scared, the residents of Vraja woke up. They sought refuge with lord Krishna, who had used his maya to appear in human form. "O Krishna! O immensely fortunate one! O Krishna! O infinitely valourous Rama! This extremely terrible fire will devour us, we who belong to you. This is extremely difficult to cross. Save us from this fire, which is like the fire of destruction. O lord! We are your well-wishers. We are incapable of letting go of your feet. How can there be any fear there?" The lord of the universe witnessed the lassitude his relatives were suffering from. Ananta drank up that terrible fire. He is the one who possesses infinite strength.'

Chapter 10(18)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Krishna was surrounded by his relatives, who were full of joy. They chanted about his glory and entered Vraja, ornamented with

herds of cows. The two of them played in Vraja in this way, using their maya to disguise themselves as cowherds. The season known as summer arrived, one that is not liked that much by embodied beings. However, because the illustrious Keshava himself resided there, along with Rama, all the characteristics of spring were seen in Vrindavana. The loud sound of waterfalls surpassed the chirping sound of crickets. The circles of trees were continuously sprayed with drops of water from the waterfalls. A breeze wafted along, above the waves of the rivers, lakes and waterfalls, bearing the fragrance and pollen from white lilies, blue lotuses and other lotuses. The residents of the forest did not suffer from any heat from the summer, forest fires or the sun. There was plenty of green grass. Waves from the fathomless waters of the river beat against the banks and in every direction, moistened the mud along the sandy banks. The fierce rays of the sun, as virulent as poison, didn't exist and didn't rob the earth of its juices and green grass. The beautiful and blossoming forest was filled with many kinds of animals and birds. Peacocks sang and bees buzzed. Cuckoos and cranes called. With Bala, the illustrious Krishna played there. He played on his flute and surrounded by gopas and the wealth of cattle, entered. [105] They decorated themselves with tender leaves, the feathers of peacocks, bunches of flowers, garlands and minerals. Rama, Krishna and the other gopas danced, wrestled and sang. When Krishna danced, some sang and some played on musical instruments. Some used flutes, others clapped with their hands. Some used horns, while others praised him. The gods had assumed the forms of cowherds and disguised themselves as gopa species. O king! They worshipped Krishna and Rama, like actors praising other actors. They whirled around and leapt. They flung and slapped their arms and dragged each other. With sidelocks like a crow's wings, [106] they sometimes played and wrestled. Sometimes, when others danced, those two themselves sang or played on musical instruments. O great king! Sometimes, they applauded, uttering words of praise. Sometimes, they played with *bilva, kumbha* or *amalaka* fruit in their hands. [107] Sometimes, covering their eyes, they played hide-and-seek and tried to touch each other. Sometimes, they pretended to be animals or birds. Sometimes, they leapt like frogs. Sometimes, they

joked in many different ways. Sometimes, they swung from swings. Sometimes, they pretended to be kings. In this way, they wandered around in that forest and in rivers, mountains, valleys, groves, woods and lakes, playing games that are known to people.

'Along with the gopas, Rama and Krishna herded animals in that forest. Desiring to capture them, the asura Pralamba came there, assuming the form of a gopa. The illustrious Dasharha, who can see everything, knew about this. However, he accepted him as a friend, thinking about a means of killing him. Krishna, who knew about playing, summoned the gopas and said, "O gopas! Let us play. Let us divide ourselves into two different groups." The two groups of gopas made Rama and Janardana their respective leaders. Some were on Krishna's side and others were on Rama's side. They played many kinds of games, with a member from one team becoming the carrier and a member from the other team becoming the carried. Those who won were carried and those who lost were the carriers. They thus carried and were carried, simultaneously herding the cattle. With Krishna at the forefront, they went to a banyan tree named Bhandiraka. O king! Shridama, Vrishabha and others from Rama's side became victorious. Having been defeated in the game, Krishna and the others had to carry them. Defeated, the illustrious Krishna carried Shridama. Bhadrasena carried Vrishabha and Pralamba carried Rohini's son. The bull among the *danava*s [108] thought that Krishna was invincible. [109] Therefore, very swiftly, he went a great distance away, far beyond where he was supposed to set the burden down. As he was carried, he [110] became as heavy as the Indra among mountains. [111] Unable to proceed, the great asura assumed his own form. He was stationed there, with golden garments and ornaments. He resembled a cloud tinged with lightning, carrying the lord of the stars on its back. The wielder of the plough was slightly distressed and scared to see him travel swiftly through the sky. His eyes blazed. His eyebrows were furrowed and his teeth were fierce. His hair was on fire and he wore a diadem, armlets and earrings. Then Bala remembered himself and no longer feared the enemy. He was trying to carry him away from his companions. Like the lord of the gods violently striking a mountain with his vajra, he angrily struck him on the head

with a firm fist. Thus struck, his hand shattered instantly. The asura vomited blood from his mouth and fell unconscious. With a great roar, he lost his life and fell down, like the sound made by a mountain on being struck by Maghavan's weapon. The gopas were extremely astounded to see that Pralamba had been killed by the extremely strong Bala. They uttered words of praise. They pronounced benedictions over him and worshipped the one who deserved to be worshipped. Their senses were overwhelmed with love. They embraced him, as if he had returned from the dead. When the wicked Pralamba was killed, the gods were greatly satisfied. They showered down garlands on Bala and uttered words of praise.'

Chapter 10(19)

Shri-Shuka said, 'While the gopas wre engrossed in playing, the cows were attracted by the grass. They grazed around on their own and went far away, entering a dense region. The goats, cows and she-buffaloes wandered from one forest to another forest. They entered a thicket of cane. Suffering from a forest conflagration, they called out loudly. Unable to see the animals, the gopas, Krishna, Rama and the others, were filled with remorse. Not knowing the path the cattle had taken, they started to search. They followed the footprints left by the cattle and the grass their hooves had torn up. At the prospect of their livelihoods being destroyed, they were senseless. All of them followed the trail. They found their respective herds of cattle crying in the thicket of *munja* grass, having strayed from the path. Finding them, they brought them back, but were thirsty and exhausted. In a voice that rumbled like clouds, the illustrious one summoned them. [112] Hearing their own names being uttered, they called back in joy. Suddenly, by chance, a forest fire broke out on all sides and would have destroyed all the residents of the forest. The wind was its charioteer and there were terrible sparks. The large flames licked at mobile and immobile objects. The forest conflagration descended on them from all sides. On seeing it, the gopas and the cattle were terrified. Just as people who are scared of death seek refuge

with Hari, they spoke to Krishna and Bala. “O Krishna! O immensely valiant one! O Krishna! O Rama! O one who is invincible in valour! We are being scorched by the forest conflagration and have sought shelter with you. You should save us. O Krishna! Your relatives do not deserve to suffer. O one who knows about all kinds of dharma! You are our protector and we are devoted to you.” The illustrious Hari heard the words of his miserable relatives. He said, “Close your eyes. Do not be afraid.” They assented and closed their eyes. The illustrious lord of yoga opened his mouth and swallowed up the terrible flames, thus saving them from the calamity. They opened their eyes and were surprised to see that they and their cattle had been saved and that they had been brought back to Bhandira again. They witnessed the valour of Krishna’s yoga and that they had been saved from the forest conflagration because of the powers of his yoga maya. They thought he was an immortal. It was late in the afternoon. With Rama, Janardana herded the cows back. Praised by the gopas, he played on his flute and returned to the settlement. On seeing Govinda, the gopis were filled with great delight. Even a kshana of separation from him made them feel as if it had been one hundred yugas.’

Chapter 10(20)

Shri-Shuka said, ‘The gopas told the women about their [113] wonderful deeds, of freeing them from the forest conflagration and about Pralamba’s death. The elders among the gopas and the gopis were astounded to hear this. They thought that two foremost gods, Krishna and Rama, had come to Vraja. The monsoon season commenced, which rejuvenates all living creatures. Lightning flashed in the directions and the sky was agitated by thunder. There were dense blue clouds in the sky, along with lightning and the sound of thunder. The stellar bodies were obscured and shrouded, just as the brahman is by the gunas. For eight months, the sun god had used his rays to drink up juices from the earth. Now that monsoon had arrived, he released that wealth of water. The large clouds flashed with lightning. They trembled

because of the terrible winds. Like a shower of compassion, water, the pleasant granter of life, was released. Because of austerities, the earth had become emaciated. She was now nourished by water from the god. It was as if a body that has performed austerities for some purpose has received the fruits. Just as night was about to start, fireflies glowed in the dark, but not the planets. It was like the evil of heretics flourishing in *kali yuga*, not the Vedas. Hearing the thunder of the clouds, frogs started to croak, just as brahmanas who have slept silently speak [114] after performing the morning rituals. Smaller rivers had turned dry. They overflowed and deviated from their courses, just like the body, riches and wealth of a man who is not in control of himself. In some parts, the ground was green because of new grass. In other parts, it was red because of *indragopa*s. [115] There was shade created by mushrooms. The earth resembled men full of prosperity. The fields were rich with grain and brought delight to farmers. Those who were proud repented, because they did not know that everything is controlled by destiny. [116] All creatures who lived on land or in the water were sprinkled with fresh water. They assumed beautiful forms, like that which is obtained by serving Hari. At confluences of rivers with the ocean, the wind made the waves turbulent. This was just like the mind of an immature yogi who is addicted to desire and is attached to the gunas. The mountains were struck by torrents of rain, but were not distressed. They were like people whose minds are in Adhokshaja and who therefore are not disturbed when assailed by hardships. The roads were overgrown and covered with grass and could not be cleaned. They were like sacred texts not studied by brahmanas and which therefore, suffer from the passage of time. Clouds are the friends of people. However, lightning is fickle in its affection. It did not remain in one place, [117] just as a woman driven by desire does not remain attached to a man with qualities, but moves around. Without a bowstring, the great Indra's bow manifested itself in the sky. [118] It was like Purusha, who is devoid of gunas, but manifests himself in this world, which is a mixture of gunas. The lord of the stars was shrouded and not radiant, its moonlight unable to triumph over the clouds. It was like an embodied being, who possesses his own radiance, but that radiance is shrouded by ahamkara. The peacocks

were festive and delighted at the arrival of the clouds and called out. They were like people who were tormented in their homes, but who became happy at Achyuta's arrival. The trees drank up water with their feet and assumed many different kinds of forms. [119] They were like people emaciated and exhausted from austerities, who then start to indulge in desire. O dear one! The cranes were disturbed, but continued to reside along the shores of the lakes. They were like people addicted to sensual pleasures, whose desires cannot be satisfied and who continue to exert in their homes, though they are disturbed. When the lord [120] showered down rain, the torrents of water breached the dams. It was just like the wicked words of heretics breaking down the paths of the Vedas in kali yuga. Goaded by the winds, the clouds released their amrita on living beings. This was just like lords of the earth, who are from time to time urged by brahmanas, and shower their benedictions. [121]

'The forest was thus prosperous with ripe dates and *jambu* fruit. Surrounded by cows and gopas, with Bala, Hari entered it, to sport there. Because of the heavy burden of their udders, the cows moved slowly. Summoned by the illustrious one, they advanced quickly, their affection making milk flow from their udders. The residents of the forest were delighted. There were rows of trees that exuded honey. The waterfalls resounded in the mountains. He saw that there were some caves nearby. When it rained, he sometimes sought refuge in the hollow of a tree or a cave. The illustrious one entered there and sported, eating tubers, roots and fruits. Near the water, he seated himself on a slab of stone and ate curds mixed with rice. He ate and the gopas and Samkarshana also ate with him. He sat on the green grass and saw the satisfied bulls, heifers and cows graze, their eyes closed. Their heavy udders made them tired. He glanced at the prosperity brought by the monsoon. The illustrious one's revered powers, which bring pleasure at all times, were enhanced. In this fashion, Rama and Keshava resided in Vraja. Autmun arrived. The clouds disappeared. The waters were clear and the wind was no longer harsh. Autmun rejuvenated the lotuses. The waters regained their natural state. It was like minds that have deviated, when they again begin to practice yoga. There were no clouds in the sky. The earth

was cleansed of mud and impurities. Creatures no longer suffered from overgrown grass. Just as devotion towards Krishna removes everything inauspicious, autumn cleansed those in every *ashrama*. The clouds gave up everything that they had possessed and their radiance was white and pure. They were like tranquil sages who have given up all desire and have been cleansed of sins. The mountains sometimes released auspicious water, but sometimes did not release it. They were like learned people, who, at the right time, grant the amrita of knowledge, or do not. Aquatic creatures that dwelt in the reducing water levels did not understand that the water was diminishing. They were like foolish men who live with their families and do not understand that that their lifespans are diminishing. Aquatic creatures that resided in the diminishing water suffered from the autumn sun. They were like miserable and distressed people who have not conquered their senses and live with their families. Very gradually, bits of land gave up the parts where there was mud. The plants gave up their state of not being ripe. They were like persevering people, who give up ahamkara, bodies and everything that is not connected with the atman. At the onset of the autumn, the waters of the ocean became silent and tranquil. They were like sages who have properly realized the atman and have therefore given up all rituals associated with the sacred texts. Farmers erect firm dams so that their fields receive an adequate supply of water. In that way, yogis control their breath of life, so that jnana does not get dissipated. The rays of the autumn sun scorched living creatures, but the lord of the stars relieved them of this. This was like the knowledge Mukunda conferred on the women of Vraja, who suffered from pride because of identification with their bodies. Bereft of clouds, the autumn sky was beautiful with sparkling stars. It was like the mind, when it is full of sattva and has insight about the purport of the sacred texts and the meaning of the brahman. The radiant full moon shone in the sky, surrounded by the stars. It was like Krishna, the lord of the Yadus, on earth, surrounded by a circle of Vrishnis. Freed from heat, people embraced the wind fragrant with forest flowers. It was neither hot, nor cold. However, this wasn't true of the gopis. Without Krishna, their minds were distracted. Like rituals performed to the lord for the sake of fruits, cows, does, female

birds and women became fertile in the autumn and sought out their own males. With the exception of *kumuda*s, [122] when the sun rose, all the lotuses blossomed. O king! They were like people who are not scared of bandits when a king is present. In cities and villages, there were large *agrayani* [123] sacrifices that pandered to the senses. Now that the two portions of Hari were present, the earth was ripe and rich with grain. Merchants, sages, kings and *snataka*s were free to emerge and go out on their respective tasks, which the rainy season had prevented them from doing. [124] They were like Siddhas, who wait for the time for their own funeral rites to arrive.' [125]

Chapter 10(21)

Shri-Shuka said, 'The autumn water was sparkling and the wind was fragrant with the scent of lotuses blooming in the water. Along with the cowherds, Achyuta entered. [126] The blossoming trees, the lakes, the rivers and the mountains resounded with the sound of maddened bees and flocks of birds. With the protectors of the herds and with Bala, the lord of Madhu entered and started to play on his flute. The women of Vraja heard the sound of the flute singing and it ignited desire. In private, some of them started to describe Krishna to their own friends. As they started to describe, they remembered Krishna's acts. O king! Since their minds were distracted by the force of desire, they could not continue. His form was like that of the best among dancers, with a crest of peacock feathers. There were *karnikara* flowers on his ears. His dazzling garments were golden yellow. He wore a *vaijayanti* garland. The holes in the flute were filled with nectar that emerged from his lips. He entered the forest of Vrindavana and made it beautiful with his footprints. Gopas surrounded him, chanting about his glories. O king! The sound of the flute stole the minds of all creatures. Hearing it, all the women of Vraja embraced each other [127] and described it to each other.

'The gopis said, "O friends! [128] This is the greatest fruit that eyes can have. We do not know of anything superior to those two faces. With their

friends, those two are entering, along with the animals. Those two sons of the lord of Vraja possess flutes. [129] We have drunk the loving sidelong glances that they cast around. They are decorated with tender mango leaves, peacock feathers, bunches of flowers and garlands of lotuses and lilies. These touch the wonderful garments that they wear. Those two are indeed resplendent in the midst of the cowherds and the herds. Sometimes, they sing. They are like the best of dancers on a stage. O gopis! The flute must have performed extremely auspicious deeds. It is drinking nectar from Damodara's lips and that only belongs to the gopis. [130] It is enjoying it alone and has only left a little bit of the juice for others. The delighted bodies of the lakes are shedding tears, just as noble trees do. [131] O friend! Vrindavana is enhancing the earth's fame. It has obtained the prosperity that results from the lotus feet of Devaki's son. Hearing Govinda's flute, the maddened peacocks are dancing. On seeing this from the top of the mountain, all the other creatures are standing motionless. Even these does, which have taken birth as foolish species, are fortunate. They have been able to approach Nanda's delight, attired in his colourful garb. With the male black antelopes, they have heard the playing of the flute. With their affectionate glances, they seem to be offering him worship." Krishna's form and conduct made it a festival for the women. They saw him. They heard the clear songs that emanated and vibrated from his flute. The goddesses, travelling in *vimana*s, [132] came under the spell of desire. Bunches of flowers were dislodged from the braids of their hair and they loosened the cords of their garments. The cows pricked up their ears and used these as receptacles to drink in the song that emanated from the flute in Krishna's mouth. The calves were drinking mouthfuls of milk from the udders and stood still. [133] With tears flowing from their eyes, their atmans seemed to embrace Govinda with their sight. "O mother! [134] The birds in this forest must generally be like sages. To see Krishna and to hear the melodious song from his flute, they have climbed on to the branches of trees, [135] laden with beautiful foliage. With their eyes closed, they have shut out all other sounds and are listening to this. Hearing Mukunda's song, it is evident that the minds of the rivers are agitated and the force of their flow has been impeded. [136] They are

stationary and are embracing Murari with their waves as arms. Clasping his two feet, they are offering him lotuses. Despite the heat, with Rama and the gopas, he is herding the animals of Vraja and following them, playing on his flute. As his friend, the cloud has lovingly fashioned an umbrella out of its own body and is showering down flowers on him. [137] The breasts of the *pulinda* women are smeared with beautiful *kunkuma* applied by their lovers and they are now completely fulfilled with the dust from his lotus feet. [138] Seeing him, they are smitten with desire. The dust is attached to the grass and they smear it on their faces and breasts and are thus freed from all mental anguish. O women! This mountain is the best among Hari's servants. It is rejoicing because it has touched Rama and Krishna's feet. It is respectfully offering them, along with the cattle and the herders, drinking water, tender grass, caves for shelter, tubers and roots. O friends! The two generous ones are following the cattle and the gopas from one forest to another. The melodious tunes of the flute are making the bodies of creatures immobile and they are stopping in their gaits. Even the trees are bristling with joy. Those two, with the wonderful marks, are also carrying ropes and nooses."' [139]

Shri-Shuka continued, 'The illustrious one roamed around Vrindavana. In this way, the gopis described his pastimes to each other and became completely immersed in him.'

Chapter 10(22)

Shri-Shuka said, 'It was the first month of *hemanta*. The *kumarika*s in Nanda's Vraja prepared *havishya* and surviving only on it, followed the vow of worshipping Katyayani. [140] O king! When the sun was rising at dawn, they bathed in the waters of the Kalindi. On the banks of the river, they fashioned an image of the goddess out of sand and worshipped her with fragrances, garlands, pastes, offerings, incense, laps, tender shoots, fruits, unbroken rice and other superior and ordinary objects. "O Katyayani! O Mahamaya! O Maha-yogini! O Adhishvari! [141] O goddess! We bow down

to you. Make the son of Nanda gopa my husband." [142] Having chanted this mantra, the maidens worshipped her. With their minds on Krishna, the maidens observed this vow for an entire month. Desiring Nanda's son as a husband, they invoked and worshipped Bhadrakali. They arose at dawn every day and called out to each other by name. Holding each other by the hand, they went to bathe in the Kalindi, chanting about Krishna's glory.

'Once, as they had done earlier, they arrived at the river and left their garments on the bank. Singing about Krishna, they happily sported in the water. The illustrious Krishna, the lord of all the lords of yoga, understood this. Surrounding himself with his friends, he went there, so as to render their rites successful. He quickly gathered up their garments and climbed up a *nipa* tree. Along with the other boys, he laughed. He spoke to them in jest. "O girls! You are suffering from having observed the vow. As you wish, come here and take back your respective garments. I am not joking, but am telling you the truth. I have never uttered a falsehood earlier and these boys know it. O slender-waisted ones! Alone, or collectively, come here and take your garments back." Seeing that he was teasing them, the gopis were filled with love. Ashamed, they glanced at each other. Though they laughed, not a single one came out. When Govinda spoke to them in this way in jest, their minds were agitated. They were submerged in the cold water, right up to their necks. Trembling, they spoke to him. "Do not be unfair in this way. You are the beloved son of Nanda gopa. O dear one! You are praised by Vraja. We are shivering. Give our garments back to us. O Shyamasundara! [143] We will do whatever you ask us to do. O one who knows about dharma! Give our clothes back to us. Otherwise, we will tell the king [144] about this." The illustrious one replied, "O ones with the beautiful smiles! If you are my servant-maids and if you are going to do what I ask you to, then come here and take your own garments back." All the girls were trembling because of the cold. Suffering from the cold, they covered their vulvas with their hands and emerged. The illustrious one saw that they were virgins and was pleased with their pure sentiments. [145] He was pleased. With the garments on his shoulder, he smiled and spoke to them. "You were firm in your vows, but have bathed naked in the water. This is an offence against the gods. To

atone for your sins, raise up your hands in salutation above your heads. After this, bow down and accept your lower garments." [146] Achyuta thus instructed the maidens of Vraja. They were also of the view that bathing naked had been a deviation from the vow. However, he is himself the infinite fulfilment of all rites. Therefore, to accomplish their desires, they bowed down before him, so that they might be cleansed of sin. The illustrious one, Devaki's son, saw that they were bowing down in that way. Satisfied and compassionate, he returned their garments to them. They [147] were completely cheated and made to feel ashamed. They were laughed at and he played with them, as if they were puppets. Their garments were stolen. However, they were so content at this association with their beloved that they did not resent this at all. They donned their own garments. They were attached to this association with their beloved. He had captivated their minds. They did not move from that place. Instead, they cast bashful glances towards him. The illustrious one understood that they wished to touch his feet. That is the reason they had resolved to undertake the vow. Damodara spoke to the women. "O virtuous ones! I know that your intention was to worship me. Anything that is approved by me always comes true. Even if something is done out of desire, if the mind is immersed in me, no desire results. This is like grain that has been fried and cooked. Generally, it cannot be made to sprout. [148] O women! Go to Vraja. You will be successful. You will enjoy nights with me. O virtuous ones! That is the reason you observed the vow of worshipping the noble one." [149] Thus instructed by the illustrious one, the kumarikas accomplished their objective. Meditating on his lotus feet, they reluctantly went to Vraja.

'After this, surrounded by the gopas, Devaki's illustrious son went far away from Vrindavana. Along with his elder brother, he herded the cows. At the time of the fierce heat of the summer, the trees spread out their shade like umbrellas, to protect him and his companions. On seeing this, he spoke to the residents of Vraja. "O Stokakrishna! [150] O Amshu! On Shridama! O Subala! O Arjuna! O Vishala! O Rishabha! O Tejasvi! O Devaprastha! O Varuthapa! Behold these immensely fortunate ones. Their lives are devoted to the welfare of others. They withstand storms, showers, heat and cold and

save us from them. Since they provide subsistence for all kinds of creatures, their birth is most wonderful. Those who desire something are never refused by good people and they are like them. They satisfy desires through leaves, flowers, fruits, shade, roots, bark, wood, fragrances, sap, ashes, kernels and tender leaves. An embodied being must always act so as to bring benefit to other creatures through life, wealth, intelligence, words and conducts. It is then that life becomes successful." Saying this, he passed through the midst of lowered branches laden with tender foliage, bunches of flowers and fruits and leaves and arrived at the Yamuna. O king! The gopas made the cows drink the sweet, cool and auspicious water. After this, they satisfied themselves by drinking that sweet water. O king! As they wished, they made the animals graze in a grove there. Suffering from hunger, they approached Krishna and Rama and spoke to them.'

Chapter 10(23)

'The gopas said, "O Rama! O mighty-armed one! O Rama! O Krishna! O destroyer of the wicked! We are suffering from hunger. You should do something to satisfy it."'

Shri-Shuka said, 'The gopas told Devaki's illustrious son this. Desiring to please his devotees, the wives of the brahmanas, he addressed them in these words. "Go to the place where the brahmanas, who know about the brahman, are worshipping the gods through a sacrifice named Angirasa. They are doing this with a desire to attain heaven. O gopas! Go there and announce that you have been sent by the illustrious one and his elder brother, mentioning us by name. Then ask for some cooked rice." Thus instructed by the illustrious one, they went and asked. They joined their hands in salutation before the brahmanas and prostrated themselves on the ground, like rods. "O divinities on earth! Listen to us. We are those who act according to Krishna's instructions. We are gopas who have been urged to come here by Rama. O fortunate ones! Recognize us. Not very far from here, Rama and Achyuta are herding the cows. They are hungry and are asking you for

some cooked rice. O brahmanas! O those who are supreme in knowledge of dharma! If you have any faith in them, give them the cooked rice they are asking for. O supreme ones! With the exception of sacrifices where animals are slaughtered, or *soutramani*, there is no sin attached to eating food that has been given by someone who has consecrated himself for a sacrifice." [151] They heard what the illustrious one desired, but did not listen. They were performing a lot of rites, but were inferior in their wishes. They prided themselves on their age and wisdom, but were foolish. He pervades the time, the place, the separate objects used, the mantras, the *tantra*s, the officiating priests, the sacrificial fires, the divinities presiding over sacrifices, the ones performing sacrifices, the *kratu*s and dharma. He is himself the supreme brahman. He is the illustrious Adhokshaja. However, their wisdom was tainted. They looked upon him as a mortal human being and did not show him respect. O scorcher of enemies! They did not say "yes", nor did they say "no". Disappointed, the gopas returned to Krishna and Rama and told them what had happened.

'Hearing this, the illustrious lord of the universe laughed. He again spoke to the gopas, intending to demonstrate to them the way people in the world behaved. "Go and tell the wives [152] that I have come here with Samkarshana. They will give you the desired food. They are affectionate and their minds are in me." They went to the place where the wives resided and saw that they were ornamented and seated. The gopas bowed down before the virtuous brahmana ladies and addressed them humbly. "O wives of the brahmanas! We bow down to you. Listen to our words. Krishna is roaming around, not far from here, and he has sent us to you. Herding the cattle, along with the cowherds and Rama, he has come a long distance away. He is hungry. He asks that you should give some food for him and his followers." They were always eager to see him. Their minds were agitated by his accounts. Hearing that Achyuta had arrived, they were filled with excitement. All of them advanced to meet their beloved, like rivers heading for the ocean. They filled vessels with the four kinds of food, with many different qualities. [153] They were restrained by their husbands, brothers, relatives and sons. However, they had heard about the illustrious Uttamashloka for a

long period of time and cherished him. Along the banks of the Yamuna, there was a grove of *ashoka* trees, decorated with tender foliage. The women saw him roaming around there, along with his elder brother, and surrounded by the gopas. He was dark blue in complexion and his garments were golden yellow. He was adorned with wild flowers, peacock feathers, minerals and tender foliage. He was in the garb of a dancer and one of his hands rested on a companion's shoulder. He twirled a lotus in his other hand. There were lilies in his ears. The locks of his curly hair dangled over his cheeks. There was a smile on his lotus face. O Indra among men! They had often heard about the glories of their beloved and it had filled their ears. Their minds were submerged in him. He now entered their inner cores through the apertures of their eyes. They embraced him for a very long time and gave up all torment, just as a wise person abandons all sense of ego. They had abandoned all desires and had come there, wishing to see him. The one who is omniscient in his vision knew this. With a smile on his face, he spoke to them. "O immensely fortunate ones! Welcome. Please be seated. What can we do for you? It is most appropriate that you have come here to see me. There are accomplished people who know about what is good for them. They constantly bind themselves to me, without any motive. They are devoted to me and love me like their own atmans. The breath of life, intelligence, the mind, relatives, the body, wives, offspring, riches and other things are loved because of association with the atman. What can be more loved than that? Go to the place where your husbands, the brahmanas, are performing a sacrifice to the gods. You will render their sacrifice successful. Their status as householders is dependent on you." The wives said, "O lord! You should not speak in this harsh way. A promise is made about resorting to your feet in the sacred texts and you should make that come true. [154] We have obtained your feet. You have kicked away garlands of tulasi leaves and we will wear them in our hair. We will free ourselves from all relationships. Our husbands, fathers, sons, brothers, relatives and well-wishers will not take us back, not to speak of others. Therefore, we have prostrated ourselves at your feet. O destroyer of enemies! There is no refuge other than you. That is what you should grant us." The illustrious one replied, "Your

husbands, fathers, brothers, sons and the other people will not be scornful of you. Since you are devoted to me, the gods will also approve of it. Among men in this world, physical association does not contribute to love and affection. Instead, if the mind is united with me, one soon attains me. It doesn't happen through physical contact, but through hearing about me, visualizing me, meditating on me, immersing thoughts in me and by chanting about me. Therefore, return to your houses." Thus instructed, the wives of the brahmanas returned to the sacrificial arena. The women were not reprimanded and the sacrifice was completed. There was one single lady who had been restrained by her husband. [155] When she heard about what had happened with the illustrious one, she clung to him in her heart. She gave up her physical body and the bonds of karma.

'The illustrious Govinda divided up the four kinds of food among the gopas. The lord made them eat and then ate himself. Thus, assuming a human body in his pastimes, he followed the conduct of the world of men. He amused himself with the cows, the gopas and the gopis and delighted them with his form, words and deeds. The brahmanas remembered and repented. "We have committed a sin. We have slighted the two supreme lords of the universe, who had disguised themselves as men." They witnessed the superhuman devotion towards the illustrious Krishna that the women possessed. They thought themselves to be inferior. They repented and censured themselves. "Shame on the three kinds of birth we have had. [156] Shame on our vows. Shame on our extensive knowledge. Shame on our lineage. Shame on our skill with rituals. We have withdrawn ourselves from Adhokshaja. Indeed, the illustrious one's maya is capable of confounding even yogis. We are brahmanas, the preceptors of men. But we have been confounded about what is good for us. Look at these women. Their devotion towards Krishna, the preceptor of the universe, is insurmountable. For those who are householders, it destroys the noose of death. They have not gone through the samskaras of brahmanas. They have not resided in the homes of the preceptors. They have not performed austerities, nor have they speculated about the nature of the atman. They have not observed any rites of purification or other auspicious rites. Nevertheless, their devotion towards Uttamashloka

Krishna, the lord of all lords of yoga, is firm. Despite our samskaras, we have not developed this. Indeed, we were confounded about what was good for us. We were intoxicated in our roles as householders. Alas! Through the words of the gopas, he had reminded us about the path followed by virtuous people. All desires are satisfied through him. He is the lord of *kaivalya* [157] and other benedictions. He is the lord of everything. Why else would the controller present us with this pretext? Giving up everything else, Shri serves him, hoping to touch his feet, casting aside all her taints. [158] His asking us was an attempt to confound people. He pervades the time, the place, the separate objects offered, mantras, tantras, officiating priests, sacrificial fires, the divinities presiding at sacrifices, the ones performing sacrifices, kratu and dharma. He is the illustrious Vishnu, the lord of all the lords of yoga, himself. We had heard that he had been born in the lineage of the Yadus. Even then, we were foolish and failed to recognize him. We are blessed that we have wives like these. Their minds are full of unwavering devotion towards Hari and so is ours. We bow down to the illustrious Krishna, whose intelligence is unlimited. His maya confounds our intelligence and we are whirled around along the path of karma. He is the original being. He confounded us through his own maya. We did not understand his powers. Our great transgression should be pardoned." Thus, they remembered their own sins and the slight that they had shown towards Krishna. Though they wished to see the two Achuytas, [159] because they were scared of Kamsa, they did not move.'

Chapter 10(24)

Shri-Shuka said, 'While residing there with Baladeva, the illustrious one saw the gopas making preparations for a sacrifice to Indra. The illustrious one is omniscient and dwells in all atmans. Though he knew, he humbly asked the elders, with Nanda at the forefront. "O father! What are all these great actitivies for? What are the expected fruits? Who is this directed towards? What are the arrangements for this sacrifice? O father! Tell me. I

have a great desire to hear about this. Virtuous people who look upon everyone else as their own selves should not keep secrets in this world. They do not distinguish between what belongs to them and what belongs to someone else. They do not distinguish between friends, those who are neutral and enemies. Even if a neutral person is avoided like an enemy, it has been said that a well-wisher is like one's own self. Regardless of whether they understand or don't understand the purposes of rites, they perform them. The learned accomplish the objectives of rites, not those who are ignorant. That being the case, has the purpose of this rite been thought about? [160] Or is it just something that people generally do? It is best that it should be properly explained to those who ask." Nanda replied, "The illustrious Indra is the rain god. The clouds represent his embodied form. They shower down the beloved water, which ensures life and subsistence to creatures. O son! We and others worship the lord and master of the clouds. Men worship him through *yajna*s and kratus, [161] using objects that are ripened through his semen. [162] The remnants of sacrifices are fruits that enable the accomplishment of the three objectives of existence. [163] For enterprising men, Parjanya is the one who determines the fruits. This is the dharma that has come down through tradition. Out of desire, hatred, fear or avarice, if a man rejects this, he does not obtain benefit." Keshava heard the words of Nanda and the other residents of Vraja. With an intention of generating Indra's anger, he spoke to his father.

'The illustrious one said, "Creatures come into being because of karma. It is because of karma that they are destroyed. Happiness, unhappiness, fear and fortune are all the outcome of karma. If there is a lord who confers fruits and other benefits of karma, he becomes dependent on the one who undertakes the karma and has no control over those who do not undertake it. [164] Creatures follow their own respective karma. In this world, what can Indra do to creatures? Men act and are driven by their own natures. What power does he have over this? Each person is under the control of his own nature and follows that nature. Gods, asuras and humans are all based on their own natures. It is because of karma that creatures are born as superior and inferior species and give up those bodies. Karma is the lord and precep-

tor, the friend, the neutral or the enemy. Therefore, one should worship karma. Based on one's own nature, one must perform one's own karma. Indeed, what can easily be done is the divinity. If one's proclivities are towards one form of subsistence, but he resorts to another, that does not ensure benefit. That is like an unchaste woman indulging with a paramour. A brahmana must devote himself to the brahman. [165] Royalty must protect the earth. [166] *Vaishya*s subsist through trade and *shudra*s by serving *dvija*s. [167] There are four kinds of means of subsistence—agriculture, trade, tending to cattle and the lending of money. We are continuously engaged in tending to cattle. Sattva, rajas and tamas are the reasons behind creation, preservation and destruction. The universe has been created out of rajas. All the many things on world result from union between one another. [168] It is rajas that urges the clouds and they shower down water in every direction. That is how subjects achieve their purposes. What does the great Indra do? We do not live in cities, habitations, villages or permanent homes. O father! We are residents of the forest. We live in forests and mountains. Therefore, we should organize a sacrifice for cattle, brahmanas and this mountain. [169] Let us use everything that has been brought together for Indra's sacrifice to accomplish that sacrifice. Let many kinds of food be cooked, ending with broth, *payasam* [170] and other things. Let small cakes be made out of flour and fried. Let cakes be baked. [171] Let all the milk products be taken for that purpose. Let the sacrificial fires be properly kindled by brahmanas who know about the brahman. Let food with many kinds of qualities be given to them. Let them be given cattle as *dakshina*. [172] Let the appropriate food be given to dogs, *shvapaka*s, *chandala*s and outcastes. [173] Let grass be given to the cows. Let offerings be rendered to the mountain. After eating, ornament yourselves. Smear yourselves with pastes and wear excellent garments. After this, circumambulate cows, brahmanas, sacrificial fires and the mountain. [174] O father! This is my view. If it appeals to you, act in accordance with this. A sacrifice for cattle, brahmanas and the mountain will please me a lot."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'The illustrious one was time himself and he wished to destroy Shakra's pride. Nanda and the others heard him and ap-

plauded and accepted his words. All of them acted exactly as Madhusudana had said. They had benedictions pronounced and offered those objects and the offerings that had been collected to brahmanas and the mountain. They gave grass to the cows. Placing the wealth of cattle ahead of them, they circumambulated the mountain. They yoked carts, and gopis ornamented themselves and rode on them, chanting about Krishna's valour. The brahmanas pronounced benedictions. So as to bring about trust in the gopas, Krishna assumed a completely different appearance, with a gigantic form. He said, "I am the mountain" and ate all the offerings. [175] Along with the people of Vraja, he himself bowed down to this form of his and said, "Behold the form of this mountain. It has favoured us by manifesting itself before us. It can assume any form at will and kill residents of the forest who disregard it. For our benefit and that of the cattle, let us bow down before it." Thus, urged by Vasudeva, the gopas undertook a sacrifice to the mountain, cows and cattle, as they had been instructed. Along with Krishna, they then returned to Vraja.'

Chapter 10(25)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O king! Indra got to know that his own worship had been stopped. He became angry with the gopas who had accepted Krishna as a protector, with Nanda and the others. There are a host of clouds named *samvartaka*, which bring about universal destruction. Taking himself to be the lord, Indra angrily goaded them in these words. "Because of their prosperity, look at the insolence of greatness that has arisen in the gopas who dwell in the forest. Seeking refuge with a mortal Krishna, they have disregarded a god. They have given up considered knowledge and have resorted to sacrifices full of rites. They wish to cross the ocean of life with these. But since these are broken, they are boats only in name. Krishna talks a lot. He is childish, arrogant and ignorant, but takes himself to be learned. Seeking refuge with a mortal Krishna, the gopas have caused displeasure to me. Their prosperity has maddened them. They take themselves to be protected

by Krishna. Destroy their prosperity, insolence and arrogance. Convey their animals to destruction. Astride the elephant Airavata, I will follow you to Vraja. To destroy Nanda's settlement, the large number of extremely forceful Maruts will be with me." The clouds were thus commanded by Maghavan. Freed from their bonds, [176] they used their energy to pour down on Nanda's Gokula and cause suffering. There were flashes of lightning. There were roars of thunder. There were a large number of fierce Maruts. Water and hailstones showered down. The showers were as thick as pillars and the clouds released them incessantly. The torrents of water flooded the earth and high and low ground could no longer be seen. Because of the excessive rain and the strong winds, the animals started to tremble. The gopas and gopis suffered from the cold and went and sought refuge with Govinda. Suffering from the downpour, they covered their heads, and their children with their bodies. Trembling, they sought refuge at the illustrious one's feet. "O Krishna! O immensely fortunate one! O Krishna! O lord! You are Gokula's protector. O one who is devoted to his devotees! You should save us from the god who is angry with us." They were suffering from the shower of hailstones and the extreme storms. Struck by these, they were senseless. On seeing this, the illustrious Hari thought that this was the work of an angry Indra. "This excessive shower and severe storms with hailstones is not characteristic of this season. Since his own sacrifice has been stopped, Indra is showering down, so as to destroy us. I will counter this through an appropriate use of my own yoga. I must take measures. There are those who foolishly pride themselves on being the lords of the worlds. I must destroy the tamas that leads to intoxication at their affluence. The lords of the gods are suffused with sattva. But since they are intoxicated with what is not sattva, this is not surprising in them. I must think of a means to quieten them and shatter their pride. Those in the settlement have sought refuge with me. I am there protector and they are dependent on me. Through my own yoga, I must protect the gopas. That is my vow."

'Saying this, with one hand, though he was still a child, he held up Mount Govardhana. Vishnu held it up easily, as if it was a mushroom. The illustrious one spoke to the gopas. "O mother! O father! O residents of Vraja! As

you wish, please enter the cavities in this mountain, along with your wealth of cattle. You should not be scared that the mountain will fall down from my hand. Nor should you be scared of the wind and the rain. This is sufficient to protect you." With their minds assured by Krishna, they comfortably entered those cavities, along with their wealth, their vehicles and their dependents. He abandoned hunger, thirst and all expectations of happiness. As the residents of Vraja looked at him, he held up the mountain for seven days and his feet did not move even a little. On witnessing the power of Krishna's yoga, Indra was extremely astounded. His pride and determination were destroyed and he asked his clouds to withdraw. The sky was clear of clouds and the sun arose. The terrible storm and rain ceased. Seeing this, the one who had held up Govardhana spoke to the gopas. "O gopas! Cast away your fears and emerge, along with your women, wealth and children. The storm and the rain have ceased. The flood in the rivers has almost receded." At this, the gopas emerged, taking their respective wealth of cattle with them. The women, the young and the aged emerged slowly, along with carts loaded with various objects. While all the creatures looked on, the illustrious lord playfully placed the mountain back at the spot where it had been earlier. The residents of Vraja were overwhelmed with a flood of love for him. They came forward, embraced him and did other things. [177] The delighted gopis affectionately worshipped him with curds, unbroken rice and water and pronounced excellent benedictions. Yashoda, Rohini, Nanda and Rama, supreme among strong ones, embraced Krishna. Overwhelmed with affection, they pronounced benedictions. O king! Large number of gods, Siddhas, Sadhyas, gandharvas and charanas praised him from the firmament and showered down flowers. O king! Urged by the gods, conch shells and drums were sounded in heaven. The lords among the gandharvas, Tumbaru being the foremost, sang. The protectors of the animals devotedly surrounded him. O king! With them and with Bala, Hari went to his own settlement. The *gopika*s [178] sang about this and other acts that he had done. He had touched their hearts and they rejoiced.'

Chapter 10(26)

Shri-Shuka said, 'The gopas witnessed this and other things that Krishna did. Since they did not know about his valour, they were extremely surprised. They approached [179] and spoke. "The deeds done by this child are extraordinary. How did he deserve to be born among ordinary people like us? As if he was playing, how could this child hold up a supreme mountain on a single hand for seven days, like a king among elephants does to a lotus? This extremely energetic one had his eyes closed. But like time devours lifespan and the body, he drank from Putana's breast and sucked out her life. When he was only one month old, he was lying down under a cart and crying. He struck it with one foot and made it overturn and fall down. When he was only a year old, he was seated and was carried through the sky by the daitya [180] Trinavarta. But he seized him by the neck, throttled him and killed him. On one occasion, because he had stolen butter, his mother tied him to a mortar. However, crawling on his hands, he went between two *arjuna* trees and brought them down. With Rama and surrounded by the children, he was herding calves in the forest. Baka wished to kill him. However, he tore apart the enemy's mouth with his arms and killed him. Vatsa [181] wanted to kill him and penetrated the calves in the form of a calf. However, he playfully hurled him and killed him, making *kapittha* fruits fall down. With Bala, he killed the daitya Rasabha [182] and his relatives, thus making the forest of palm, filled with ripe fruit, safe. He arranged that the extremely strong Bala should kill Pralamba. He rescued the animals of Vraja and the gopas from the forest conflagration. In the pool, he subdued the Indra among serpents who possessed virulent poison. He forcibly exiled him from Yamuna, freeing the water from the poison. All of us, the residents of Vraja, have an affection towards him that is impossible to give up. O Nanda! Your son is also attached to you and to us. How did this come about? How can a mere child, who is seven years old, hold up a giant mountain? Who is he? O lord of Vraja! Therefore, we have a doubt about your son." Nanda replied, "O gopas! Listen to my words and do not have any doubts about my son. This is what Garga had told me about this son. [183] 'According to the yuga, this one has adopted bodies with three different

complexions—white, red and yellow. He is now dark. Earlier, this son of yours used to belong to Vasudeva. Therefore, those who know will refer to this prosperous one as Vasudeva. This son of yours has many kinds of names and forms. His qualities and deeds are also similar. I know about them, but other people do not. He will be the delight of Gokula and will bring welfare to the gopas. It is through him that you will easily pass over all the difficulties. O lord of Vraja! Earlier, the virtuous suffered from bandits. They were not protected by a king. However, he vanquished the flourishing bandits. Enemies and asuras cannot overcome those who have Vishnu on their side. Those immensely fortunate men bring him pleasure. O Nanda! Therefore, this son of yours is like Narayana in his qualities. Therefore, do not be surprised at his prosperity, powers and deeds.' Garga directly instructed me in this way and returned to his own home. I think that Krishna, unblemished in his deeds, has been born as Narayana's portion." Hearing Nanda's words and what Garga had chanted, the residents of Vraja were filled with joy. Their wonder vanished and they worshipped Nanda and Krishna. The god who showers was angry that his sacrifice had been stopped and showered down thunder, hail stones and winds. Suffering, the protectors of animals and the women sought refuge with him. On seeing this, he was filled with compassion. Though he was only a child, he playfully uprooted the mountain and held it up in a single hand, as if it was a mushroom. He protected the settlement and destroyed the great Indra's pride. May the lord of cows be pleased with us.'

Chapter 10(27)

Shri-Shuka said, 'He held up Mount Govardhana and protected Vraja from the downpour. Surabhi came down to Krishna from Goloka. [184] Shakra was with her. He approached him in a private place. He was ashamed that he had shown him disrespect. He touched his feet with his diadem, which was as radiant as the sun. Indra had seen, and had heard about, Krishna's powers and his infinite energy. His pride at being the lord of the three worlds had

been destroyed. He joined his hands in salutation and said the following. Indra said, "Your abode is serene and is pure sattva. It is full of austerities and is devoid of anything created by rajas or tamas. This great confluence of gunas is full of maya. It results from the bondage of ignorance and does not exist in you. O lord! Avarice and other things are the signs and symptoms of ignorance. They are the result and the cause. [185] How can these exist in you? For the protection of dharma and for punishing the wicked, you nevertheless wield the rod of chastisement. You are the father. You are the preceptor. You are the controller of the universe. You are time, which is impossible to cross. For the sake of welfare, you wield the rod of chastisement. Out of your own will, you assume forms and perform acts. You destroy the pride of those who take themselves to be lords of the universe. There are ignorant ones like me, priding ourselves on being lords of the universe. On seeing you, fearless in the form of time, we quickly abandon that insolence. We give up our pride and completely follow the path of the noble. This action of yours is only meant to instruct the wicked. As a consequence of my lordship, I was flooded with insolence. Ignorant of your powers, I committed a crime against you. O lord! You should pardon those who are foolish in intelligence. O lord! O supreme one! May I never suffer from such wicked sentiments again. O Adhokshaja! O god! Many leaders of armies have been born. They are a burden on earth and create many difficulties. Your avatara is for their destruction and for the welfare of those who resort to your feet. I bow down to the illustrious one, the great-souled Purusha. I bow down to Vasudeva Krishna, the lord of the Satvatas. According to the wishes of your devotees, you assume a form. Your form is pure knowledge. You are in everything. You are the seed of everything. I bow down to the one who is in the atmans of all creatures. O illustrious one! When my sacrifice was stopped, full of pride, I was filled with fierce rage. I tried to destroy this settlement with showers and terrible winds. O lord! You showed me your favours and destroyed my arrogance and my futile efforts. You are my lord and preceptor. I seek refuge with you." Krishna was thus praised by Maghavan. With a voice that rumbled like that of the clouds, he smiled and spoke these words. The illustrious one replied, "O Maghavan! It

was out of a favour to you that I had your sacrifice stopped, so that you might always remember me. You were intoxicated because of your prosperity as Indra. If a person is blind with the arrogance of prosperity and opulence, he does not see me, with the rod of chastisement in my hand. If I desire to show him a favour, I dislodge him from that prosperity. O Shakra! Leave and act in accordance with my instructions. Remain in the position of responsibility you have been entrusted with, but remain free of insolence." After this, along with her own offspring, the spirited Surabhi approached and spoke to Krishna, the lord who was in the form of a gopa. Surabhi said, "O Krishna! O great yogi! O Krishna! O one whose atman is the universe! O one who is the origin of the universe! O Achyuta! You are the protector of the worlds and you are our protector too. You are our supreme divinity. O lord of the universe! Become our Indra. For the welfare of cattle, brahmanas, gods and virtuous people, become our ruler. Urged by Brahma, we will undertake a consecration ceremony to make you our Indra. O one whose atman is the universe! You have descended so as to reduce the burden of the earth." Thus, Surabhi invited Krishna and consecrated him with her milk. Along with the divine rishis and urged by the mothers of the gods, [186] Indra sprinkled him with water from the celestial Ganga, brought by Airavata's trunk. He gave Dasharha the name of Govinda. "I am the Indra of the gods. You have become the Indra of the cows. In the worlds and on earth, men will chant about you as Govinda." [187] Tumbaru, Narada and the others arrived there—gandharvas, *vidyadhara*s, [188] Siddhas and charanas. They sang about the fame of Hari, the one who cleanses the worlds of impurities. Filled with joy, the celestial women danced. All the prominent ones among the gods praised him. They showered him with wonderful flowers. The three worlds obtained great satisfaction. The cows flooded the earth with milk. Floods of many kinds of juices flowed along the rivers. Honey flowed out of the trees. Even without being ploughed, the plants yielded copious crops. The mountains brought out jewels. [189] O extender of the Kuru lineage! All this happened at Krishna's consecration. O son! Even those who are cruel by nature, gave up all enmity. In this way, Shakra in-

stated Govinda as the lord of cows and of Gokula. Surrounded by the gods and others, he then took his leave and returned to heaven.'

Chapter 10(28)

Shri-Shuka said, 'On one occasion, Nanda fasted on the eleventh lunar day. He worshipped Janardana and on the twelfth lunar day, entered the waters of the Kalindi, so as to bathe. He had ignored the time meant for the asuras and had entered the waters in the night. At this, one of Varuna's asura servants seized him and brought him to his presence. Unable to see him, the gopas exclaimed, "O Krishna! O Rama!" The illustrious one heard that his father had been taken away by Varuna. O king! The lord who grants freedom from fear to his own went to his presence. Seeing Hrishikesha, the guardian of the world worshipped him with great offerings, taking the sight of him to be a great festival. Varuna said, "O lord! This is wonderful. My body has become successful today. I have obtained the ultimate objective. O illustrious one! Those who serve at your feet obtain the supreme destination. O illustrious one! I bow down to you. You are the brahman and the paramatman. Maya fashions the creation of the worlds, but it has not been heard to exist in you. My attendant is foolish and ignorant. He does not know about the right tasks. He has brought your father here. You should pardon me. O Krishna! O one who sees everything! You should show me your favours. O Govinda! O one who is devoted to your father! Take your father away from here." The illustrious Krishna, the lord of all the lords, was thus pleased. He took his own father back and his relatives were delighted.

'Nanda was astounded to see the great opulence of the guardian of the world, something that he had not seen before, and also at the honours they [190] had shown Krishna. He told his relatives about this. O king! The gopas formed the view that he was the supreme lord. Their minds were eager and they wondered, "He is the supreme lord. Will he bestow on us his own subtle destination?" The illustrious one witnessed everything and himself dis-

cerned what his kin desired. Out of compassion towards them, he started to think about how he might fulfil their wishes. “People in this world circle around as inferior and superior species because of ignorance, desire and karma. They do not know about their own destinations.” The extremely compassionate and illustrious Hari thought about it in this way. He showed the gopas his own world, which is beyond tamas. This is truth and infinite knowledge. This is the eternal resplendence of the brahman. After transcending the gunas, controlled sages can see this. They were first conveyed to Brahma’s lake. After being submerged there, they were raised up by Krishna. They saw Brahma’s world, which Akrura had seen in earlier times. [191] Nanda and the others were extremely surprised to see Krishna being praised there through hymns. They were filled with supreme satisfaction and delight.’

Chapter 10(29)

Shri-Shuka said, ‘The illustrious one saw that the autumn nights were beautiful with blossoming *mallika* flowers. He made up his mind to enjoy himself and resorted to his yoga maya. [192] The lord of the stars arose, smearing the eastern horizon with its cool and red-tinged beams and making it pleasant for those who watched. It was as if a beloved husband had returned after a long time and was wiping away the sorrow from his beloved wife’s face. [193] He saw the unbroken full moon, red like newly applied kunkuma and resembling Rama’s face. It made the night lotuses bloom. The gentle beams tinged the forest. He played a melodious tune and it stole the hearts of the women with beautiful eyes. The women of Vraja heard the song that increased their desire. Their minds were stolen by Krishna. Not noticed by each other, they went to where their beloved was. Because of their hurry, their earrings swung back and forth. They were eager. Some were milking cows. But without finishing the milking, they went to him. Some had placed vessels of milk, [194] others had placed dishes for cooking. Without removing these, they departed. Some were serving, but left it in-

complete. Some were feeding babies milk from their breasts, but left it. Some were feeding their husbands, others were themselves eating. But they forgot the food and left. Some were smearing or cleaning their bodies, others were applying collyrium to their eyes. Some were adorning themselves with garments and ornaments, but left these in disarray. They rushed towards Krishna. They were restrained by their husbands, fathers, brothers and relatives. However, their minds had been stolen by Govinda and, captivated, they did not return. Some gopis were in the inner quarters and couldn't find a means of coming out. Filled with love for Krishna, they closed their eyes and meditated on him. The torment of being separated from their beloved was fierce and impossible to withstand. It cleansed all that was inauspicious. They obtained Achyuta in their meditation and the bliss of that embrace exhausted their auspicious deeds. [195] They united with the paramatman, their minds regarding him as a paramour. They gave up their bodies, full of gunas, and were instantly freed of all bondage.'

The king asked, 'O sage! They knew Krishna as a supreme beloved, not as the brahman. Their minds were full of gunas. How could the flow of gunas cease for them?'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'Earlier, it was explained to you how the king of Chedi [196] attained success. This happened for someone who hated Hrishikesha. What needs to be said about those who loved Adhokshaja? O king! He is without decay. He is beyond measurement. Though his atman is behind the gunas, he is devoid of gunas. However, for the purpose of ensuring the welfare of men, the illustrious one manifests himself. Those who constantly harbour desire, anger, fear, identity and affection towards Hari eventually become unified with him. You should not be amazed at this accomplishment on the part of the illustrious Aja. Krishna is the lord of all the lords of yoga. He ensures all emancipation. The illustrious one saw that the women of Vraja had come to his presence.

'The best among speakers spoke to them, his enchanting words bewildering them. The illustrious one said, "O immensely fortunate ones! Welcome. What can I do to please you? Is everything well in Vraja? Tell me the reason why you have come here. O slender-waisted ones! This night is terrible

in form and is frequented by beings that are terrible. Go back to Vraja. You should not remain here. On not seeing you, your mothers, fathers, sons, brothers and husbands will begin to search. You should not create anxiety for your relatives. You have seen the blossoming forest, dazzling because of the beams of the lord of the full moon night. [197] The breeze that is blowing from the Yamuna is playing and toying with the beautiful tender foliage. O virtuous ladies! Therefore, return to the settlement without any delay and serve your husbands. The calves and children are crying. Feed them milk and do the milking. On the other hand, your hearts may be completely controlled by love for me. That is the reason you have come. This is normal on your part, since creatures are attracted to me. The supreme dharma for a woman is to faithfully serve her husband, ensure the welfare of the relatives and take care of the children, without any deceit. A woman who desires the worlds must not abandon her husband, even if he is evil in conduct, unfortunate, aged, foolish, diseased or poor, as long as he is not a great sinner. For women who are from noble families, illicit intercourse is always condemned, even if it happens to be a minor one. This does not lead to heaven. It brings ill fame and hardship. It generates fear. You should therefore not have any proximity to me, through hearing about me, seeing me, meditating on me, loving me and chanting about me. Hence, return to your homes." The gopis heard these disagreeable words spoken by Govinda. Since their wishes were not met, they were distressed. They faced an anxiety that was extremely difficult to overcome. Their faces were downcast and they grieved. They sighed. Their lips were like *bimba* fruit and those dried up. With the nails on their toes, they scratched on the ground. The tears smudged and washed away the collyrium and the kunkuma on their breasts. They stood there, silently bearing the heavy burden of misery. He was their beloved, though he had not addressed them in the words of a beloved. They had given up all other desires for his sake. They wiped their eyes and controlled their weeping. They were still attached to him. But somewhat angry, they addressed him in faltering words. The gopis said, "O lord! You should not speak to us in these cruel words. We have given up all material objects and have resorted to your feet. We are devoted to you and you should love us

back. You are difficult to abandon. Do not abandon us. O god! You should be like the original being, who serves those who seek emancipation. You know about dharma and you have said that the natural dharma of women is to serve their husbands, offspring and well-wishers. O dear one! O lord! This instruction should actually be applied to you. You are loved by all those who possess bodies. Indeed, as the atman, you are the relative. Those who are accomplished are attached to you, as their own atmans. You are the one who is always loved. What do husbands, sons and the others amount to? They lead to nothing but hardships. O supreme lord! Be pleased with us and do not cast us away. O lotus-eyed one! We have cherished you for a very long time. Our minds were cheerfully engaged in our homes. Our hands were engaged in undertaking household tasks. But you took us away. Our feet will not move away from where your feet are. How can we go back to Vraja? What will we do there? O dear one! Pour the amrita from your lips and flood us. Your smiling glances and your melodious songs have ignited a fire in our hearts. O friend! Otherwise, we will give up our bodies in the fire of separation, meditating on your feet and obtaining your state. O lotus-eyed one! When Rama touches your feet, it is like a special occasion for her. You love us, the residents of the forest, and we will also touch them. From this moment onwards, there is no one other than you who will be directly able to stand before us. Indeed, we have been completely fulfilled by you. Along with Tulasi, [198] Shri desires the dust on your lotus feet, which should be enjoyed by devotees, even though she has obtained a position on your chest. Even the gods make efforts to ensure her favourable glances. In that way, we have also approached you for the dust on your feet. O destroyer of all distress! Show us your favours. We have given up our homes and have approached your lotus feet. We hope to worship you. Because of your beautiful smiles and glances, our desire is intense. O ornament among men! Our hearts are tormented. Grant us this servitude. Your face is covered with curly locks of hair. You wear beautiful earrings and your cheeks are shining because of those. There is nectar in your lips and you have smiling glances. We have seen these. We have seen your mighty arms, which grant freedom from fear. Your chest is the source of pleasure for Shri. Grant us this servi-

tude. O dear one! On hearing the melodious and drawn-out rhythm of the music from your flute, which woman in the three worlds will not be captivated and will not deviate from noble and sanctioned conduct? The sight of your form brings fortune to the three worlds. It charms cattle, birds, trees and animals and makes their body hair stand up in delight. It is evident that you have been born to dispel the fear and afflictions of those in Vraja. This is just like the god, the original being, [199] who protected the world of the gods. O friend of those who are afflicted! Therefore, place your lotus hands on the warm breasts and heads of your servant maids." The lord of all the lords of yoga heard their piteous words. He was always satisfied in his own self. Nevertheless, out of compassion, he laughed and proceeded to satisfy the gopis.

'Achyuta was pervasive in his deeds and their faces bloomed when he cast loving glances at them. His broad smile displayed his radiant teeth, which were like *kunda* flowers. They assembled around him and he dazzled, like the moon, [200] when it is surrounded by stars. The leaders among those hundreds of women sang and he sang back. Wearing the vaijayanti garland, he wandered around that forest, rendering it resplendent. With the gopis, he entered the sandy banks of the river. The sand was made cool by the breeze, fragrant with the scent of night lotuses, which blew over the waves. He extended his arms and embraced them, touching their hands, hair, thighs, girdle strings, breasts in sport. He pricked them with the tips of his nails. He glanced at them in jest and laughed with the beauties of Vraja. He gave them pleasure and ignited the god of love [201] in them. Having obtained the great-souled and illustrious Krishna, each of those women became proud, taking herself to be the greatest on earth. Keshava noticed that they were proud and arrogant at their good fortune. Therefore, to pacify this and to show them his favours, he instantly vanished.'

Chapter 10(30)

Shri-Shuka said, 'The illustrious one suddenly disappeared. Unable to see him, the women of Vraja were tormented. They were like female elephants, without the leader of the herd. The minds of the women were agitated by the movements, loving smiles, playful glances, delightful conversation, jests and other allurements of Rama's lord. They took themselves to be him and started to imitate his pastimes. They were so immersed in him that the bodies of those beloved ones became like images of their beloved, in moving, smiling, glancing, speaking and other things. They identified with him and were bewildered by Krishna's pastimes. Those women told each other, "I am him." Collectively, they sang loudly. Like mad women, they searched in one forest and then in another forest and asked the trees about him. Like the sky, he is the Purusha who is inside and outside all beings. "O *ashvattha*! [202] O *plaksha*! O *nyagrodha*! Have you seen Nanda's son? Having stolen our minds with his loving smiles and his glances, he has vanished. O *kurubaka*! O ashoka! O *naga*! O *punnaga*! O *champaka*! Has Rama's younger brother, who destroys the pride of proud women with his smiles, come here? O fortunate tulasi! You love Govinda's feet. Achyuta loves you a lot and wears you, along with a swarm of bees. Have you seen him? O *malati*! O mallika! O *jati*! O *yuthika*! Have you seen Madhava? Has he passed this way, causing you pleasure with the touch of his hands? O *chuta*! O *priyala*! O *panasa*! O *asana*! O *kovidara*! O jambu! O *arka*! O bilva! O *bakula!* O *amra*! O kadamba! O nipa! All the others who have been born for the sake of others and live along the banks of the Yamuna—tell us about Krishna's trail. We have lost our minds because we are separated from him. O earth! What austerities have you performed to merit the touch of Krishna's feet? It has been like a festival and you are radiant, with your body hair standing up in joy. [203] Has it been caused now, or is it because his feet touched you earlier, in the course of Urukrama's valour? [204] Or is it because he embraced your body in the form of the boar? O wife of the antelope! O friend! Has Achutya passed this way with his beloved? Did his limbs cause delight to your eyes? Was his garland of kunda flowers coloured from the kunkuma on the breasts of his loved, when he engaged

with her? The breeze bears the scent of the leader of our lineage. O trees! Did Rama's younger brother pass this way, with one hand resting on his beloved's shoulder and the other holding a lotus? Did crazy bees, blind with intoxication, swarm around his bunch of tulasi leaves and follow him here? When you bowed down at his feet, did he acknowledge that with loving glances? Let us ask these creepers. They are embracing the arms [205] of the trees. Since they are prickling with joy, they must have been touched by the nails of his hand." Maddened and confused while searching for Krishna, the gopis spoke in this way.

'With their hearts immersed in him, they started to imitate the illustrious one's pastimes. One pretended to be Putana, while another pretended to be Krishna and sucked at her breast. One pretended to be a child and cried, while kicking another who was pretending to be the cart. One acted as the daitya [206] and carried away another, who was enacting the role of the infant Krishna. Another crawled, dragging her feet and jingling her anklets. Two imitated Krishna and Rama, while the others pretended to be gopas. One imitated the act of killing Vatsa, while another imitated that of killing Baka. One imitated Krishna calling the cows when they had wandered far away. Another pretended to sport and play on the flute, while the others uttered words of praise. One placed her hand on another one's shoulder and walked. With her mind on him, she said, "I am Krishna. Behold my graceful gait." One sought to raise her upper garment with her hand and said, "Do not be scared of the storm and the rain. I have arranged for you to be saved." O king! Using her feet, one climbed on to another one's head and said, "O wicked serpent! I have been born. Go away from here. I will certainly impose the rod of chastisement on those who are wicked." Another said, "O gopas! Look at this fierce forest conflagration. Quickly close your eyes. I will easily arrange for your safety." One tied another to a mortar with a garland of flowers. The one who had been tied covered her beautiful eyes with her hands and pretended to be afraid. In this way, they asked the creepers and trees of Vrindavana about Krishna's whereabouts.

'In one part of the forest, they saw the paramatman's footprints. "It is evident that these are the footprints of Nanda's great-souled son. The marks of

the standard, lotus, vajra, goad, barley and other things can be seen." Following and tracing out his footprints along the trail, those women advanced. However, they were distressed on seeing that his footprints were mingled with those of a young woman. They said, "Whose footprints are these? Who has walked with Nanda's son? He must have rested his forearm on her shoulder, just as an elephant rests its trunk on a she-elephant. She must have indeed worshipped the illustrious lord, Hari. Pleased with her, he has abandoned us and gone with her to a secret place. O friends! The particles of dust on Govinda's lotus feet are sacred. For destroying their sins, Brahma, Isha and the goddess Rama place the dust on their heads. But these footprints of hers have agitated us a lot. Among all the gopis, she alone has been taken aside and is enjoying Achyuta's lips in private. However, her footprints can no longer be seen here. It must indeed be the case that the sharp blades of grass have caused pain to the delicate soles of her feet. Therefore, our beloved has raised and carried his beloved. O gopis! Behold. In this spot, as he has carried the young woman, his footprints have sunk deeper into the ground. Krishna, full of desire, had a heavy burden. To collect flowers, the great-souled one placed his beloved down here. This is where our beloved made efforts to collect flowers for his beloved. Behold. These footprints are not complete, because he stood up on the front part of his feet. Filled with desire, this is where he must have decorated his beloved's hair. It is certainly the case that he sat down here, so as to fasten them on the braids of his beloved's hair. He finds pleasure in himself and is always complete. Nevertheless, this is where he found pleasure with her. He wanted to demonstrate what happens to those who are filled with desire and also the state of evil-souled women." Bereft of their senses, the gopis showed each other these and wandered around.

'Leaving the other women in the forest, there was a gopi whom Krishna had taken with him. She now took herself to be the best among all the women. "Abandoning the other gopis, who also desire him, my beloved serves me alone." When they reached a certain spot in the forest, this proud one told Keshava, "I cannot walk any further. Please carry me to wherever you want to go." Thus addressed, he told his beloved, "Climb on to my

shoulder." Having said this, Krishna instantly vanished and the young woman was tormented. "O protector! O most beloved one! Where are you? O mighty-armed one! Where are you? Show compassion towards your wretched servant-maid. O friend! Reveal your presence to me." Not very far away, the other gopis were searching out the illustrious one's trail. They saw their bewildered and miserable friend, separated from her beloved. She told them how Madhava had shown her a lot of respect and how she had been humiliated because of her wicked nature. Hearing this, they were filled with great wonder.

'They entered the forest, as far as the moonlight would illuminate it. However, noticing that it was being enveloped in darkness, the women withdrew. Their minds were immersed in him. They conversed about him. They imitated his deeds and they were full of him. They sang about his qualities. They remembered neither themselves, nor their homes. They again returned to the sandy banks of the Kalindi and thought about him. They collectively sang about Krishna and wished that he should return.'

Chapter 10(31)

'The gopis said, "It is because of your birth that Vraja has become even more glorious and Indira [207] resides here constantly. O beloved one! Those who are devoted to you wish to see you. Our lives subsist on you and we have been searching. Show yourself. O lord of pleasure! The beauty of your glance surpasses the inside of a perfectly formed lotus in a clear lake of autumn water. O one who bestows boons! Without paying a price, you have obtained us as your female servants. You are killing us. Is that not the same as murder? O powerful one! You have repeatedly protected us from many kinds of fear—drinking poisoned water, the rakshasa in the form of a reptile, [208] rain, storm, lightning, fire, the bull [209] and Maya's son. [210] You are clearly not the son of a gopi. You are the atman, dwelling as a witness inside all creatures. O friend! For the sake of the protection of the universe, Vikhanasa [211] prayed to you. You accordingly appeared in the lineage of the

Satvatas. O best among the Vrishni lineage! You created freedom from fear. Those who are scared of samsara approach your feet. O beloved one! Your lotus hand bestows all desire. It is the one you have used to grasp Shri's hand. Please place it on our heads. O brave one! You are the one who destroys the sufferings of the residents of Vraja. Your smile destroys the pride of your own devotees. O friend! We, women, are your servants. Show us your beautiful lotus face. You destroy the sins of embodied creatures who prostrate themselves before you. You follow creatures that graze on grass and they are Shri's abode. You placed your lotus feet on the hoods of the serpent. Please place them on our breasts and quench the desire in our hearts. Your voice is sweet and your words are captivating. You are attractive to the minds of the intelligent. O lotus-eyed one! O brave one! You do what you ask us to and we are bewildered. With the nectar from your lips, please restore life to us. The amrita of your account is described by the wise. It destroys the sins of those who are tormented by life. It brings auspiciousness and prosperity to those who hear. O generous one! People on earth chant about them. O beloved one! Your smiles, your loving glances and your pastimes are auspicious for us to meditate on. O deceiver! The private conversations with you touch our hearts, but also agitate our minds. O protector! O beloved one! When you leave Vraja to herd the animals, gravel, blades of grass and sprouts hurt your beautiful lotus feet and make us suffer. Our minds are disturbed. Dark-blue curls hang over your lotus face. At the close of the day, it is smeared with thick dust. O brave one! You ignite desire in our minds. You grant the desires of those who prostrate themselves before you. The one who has been born from the lotus worships you. Your lotus feet ornament the earth and must be meditated on. O beloved! O destroyer of mental anguish! Please satisfy us by placing them on our breasts. Your beautiful lips repeatedly kiss the vibrating flute. They enhance desire and destroy grief. They make men forget attachment and other things. O brave one! Please grant us the amrita from your lips. During the day, when you wander around in the forest, a truti without being able to see you seems like an extended yuga. The curly locks hang over your handsome face. We look at you. However, the creator must be foolish. He gave us eye-

lashes that make us blink. O Achyuta! We have come to you after ignoring our husbands, sons, followers, brothers and relatives. O one who knows about movements! We have been confused by your music. O deceiver! Who but you will abandon women in the night? The private conversations, your smiling face and the loving glances stir our hearts. Your broad chest is Shri's residence. On beholding it, repeated urges of excessive desire confound our minds. O dear one! Fot the residents of Vraja and the forest, your appearance destroys all distress and brings what is auspicious to the universe. We are full of desire for you. Please grant us a little bit of something that counters this disease in those who are your own devotees. O beloved one! Please place your beautifully formed lotus feet on our breasts. We are scared when you roam around the harsh terrain of the forest. Do small stones and the like not hurt you? Our minds are in a whirl. Our lives depend on you."'

Chapter 10(32)

Shri-Shuka said, 'The gopis lamented and chanted in these colourful ways. O king! Desiring to see Krishna, they wept in loud voices. Shouri appeared in their midst, a smile on his lotus face. He was attired in yellow garments and wore a garland. He was capable of confounding Manmatha's mind. [212] The women saw that their beloved had arrived. Their eyes dilated in delight. They simultaneously stood up, as if life had returned to all their bodies. One joyfully clasped Shouri's lotus hands in her joined hands. Another placed his arm, smeared with sandalwood paste, on her shoulder. A slender one accepted the betel leaf chewed by him in her cupped palms. Another tormented one placed his lotus feet on her breasts. One was filled with both love and rage and furrowed her eyebrows. She bit her lips with her teeth and cast sidelong glances at him, as if to injure him. Another glanced fixedly at him, savouring his lotus face. She drank it in but was not satisfied, just as virtuous people aren't with his feet. Another placed him in her heart through the apertures in her eyes and closed them. When she embraced him mentally, her body hair stood up, like that of a yogi who is flooded with bliss. Seeing Keshava, all of them were satisfied, as if there were great festivities. They gave up the torment they had suffered from the separation, like people when they attain wisdom. [213] They were free of all misery and the illustrious Achyuta was surrounded by them. O son! He became even more resplendent, like Purusha with his powers. Collecting them, the lord went to the sandy banks of the Kalindi. The breeze bore the fragrance of blooming kunda and *mandara* flowers and attracted bees. The auspicious beams of the autumn moon dispelled the taints of the darkness. There was soft sand, which the river with the dark waters had placed there, using her waves like hands. On seeing him, the joy banished all the grief in their hearts. It was as if the sacred texts had attained their ultimate wishes. [214] Their upper garments were smeared with the kunkuma from their breasts. They spread these out and created a seat for the one who was loved more

than their own selves. The illustrious lord, who is in the hearts of all the lords of yoga, seated himself on the seat that had been fashioned. In that assembly of the gopis, his resplendent body, the reservoir of all the prosperity in the three worlds, was worshipped.

'He had ignited love in them and they worshipped him accordingly. They cast smiling and playful glances at him and arched their eyebrows. They pressed his hands and feet and placed them on their laps. They praised him. But they also pretended to be slightly angry and said the following. The gopis said, "Some show favours to those who love them, others act in a contrary way. But there are those who do not do either. Please explain this to us properly." The illustrious one said, "O friends! Those who reciprocate each other's love do it for their own selfish reasons. It has nothing to do with affection or dharma. It is selfishness and nothing else. Those who love those who do not love them back are truly compassionate. They are like parents. O slender-waisted ones! That kind of affection and dharma is without blemish. There are some who do not love those who love them, not to speak of those who do not love them. They are satisfied in their own atmans, have accomplished all their desires, are ungrateful, or hate their superiors. O friends! Even when I am loved by living beings, I do not love them back. That is because I wish to urge their propensities to love me. [215] When a person who is poor obtains some riches and that is destroyed, he can think of nothing else and know nothing else. O women! For my sake, you have given up the commonly held views on the Vedas and your own relatives and have followed me. You loved me even when I vanished and was not in sight. O loved ones! You should not seek to harm someone you love. You have acted out of your own virtuous intentions and you are free of all blemish. Even if I possess the lifespan of the gods, I cannot pay you back. [216] You have loved me after severing the bonds of the household, which are so very difficult to give up. May that virtuous deed be rewarded."'

Chapter 10(33)

Shri-Shuka said, 'In this way, the gopis heard his extremely enchanting words. O dear one! They cast aside the torment of separation. Having touched him, their wishes were fulfilled. With those jewels among women, Govinda started the pastime of rasa krida. They happily linked their ams with each other. [217] The festival of rasa commenced and Krishna, the lord of yoga, was in the midst of that circle of gopis, ornamenting it. He entered in between every couple of gopis. [218] He clasped his hands around the neck and each woman took herself to be the closest to him. The minds of the residents of heaven were captivated by the sight. Along with their wives, they assembled to witness it and the firmament was filled with hundreds of vimanas. Kettledrums were sounded and flowers were showered down. The lords among the gandharvas, along with their women, chanted about his blemishless glories. As the women sported with their beloved in that circle of rasa, a tumultuous sound arose from their bangles, anklets and the bells around their waists. Devaki's illustrious son appeared in an extremely resplendent form. He was like a giant emerald, in the midst of gold-encrusted jewels. Krishna's young female companions sang, as radiant as flashes of lightning in a circle of clouds. [219] Their feet moved in measured treads and they moved their hands. They smiled and arched their eyebrows. They bent their waists and their breasts and garments moved. Their earrings swung against their cheeks. Their faces perspired and the braids on their hair and their garments were loosened. As they danced, they sang loudly. Loving the pleasure, they clung to his neck. They were delighted at being able to touch Krishna and the sound of their singing permeated everything. One sang along with Mukunda and her pitch did not mingle with his, but rose above it. Pleased at this, he honoured her by uttering words of praise. As her voice vibrated in the introductory words of the song, [220] he showed her even greater honours. One got exhausted from rasa. Her bangles and mallika flowers slipped. The wielder of the club was standing next to her. He clasped her and placed her arm on his shoulder. Krishna's arm was on another one's shoulder and was fragrant with the smell of blue lotus and the anointment of sandalwood paste. She smelt it and kissed it, her body hair

standing up. As she danced, another gopi's glittering earrings moved. She placed her cheek alongside his cheek and he gave her the betel leaf that he was chewing. Another sang and danced, her anklets and the bells on her girdle jingling. Achyuta was by her side. When she was exhausted, she placed his auspicious lotus hands on her breasts. The gopis had obtained their beloved Achyuta, dearly loved by Shri alone. With his arms around their necks, they sang about him and rejoiced. Their cheeks were rendered beautiful by the lotus flowers on their ears, the locks that hung down and the perspiration. There was the musical sound from bangles and anklets. The gopis danced with the illustrious one and the garlands dropped from their hair. Swarms of bees joined in as additional singers. In this way, Rama's lord sported himself with the beautiful women of Vraja. He embraced and touched them with his hands. He cast gentle glances at them and laughed enticingly. It was as if a child was playing with its own reflection. O extender of the Kuru lineage! At the physical association with him, they were delighted and their senses were overwhelmed. The women of Vraja could not prevent their hair, garments and coverings on their breasts from becoming dishevelled and loosened. Their garlands and ornaments were scattered. On witnessing Krishna's pastimes, the celestial women in the sky were captivated. They were afflicted by desire. The moon, along with its companions, [221] was amazed. He assumed as many different forms as there were gopa women. Satisfied completely within himself, the illustrious one playfully sported with them. O dear one! When he saw that their faces were exhausted from the pleasures and pastimes, he was full of compassion and lovingly wiped their faces with his hands. The gold earrings worn by the gopis dazzled. The shining locks of curly hair enhanced the beauty of their cheeks. Their glances were full of sweet smiles. They honoured the powerful one and sang about his auspicious deeds. They were delighted at having been touched by his finger nails. He was exhausted from the physical association with them. His garland was crushed and smeared with the kunkuma from their breasts. Along with them, he entered the water, like an elephant that has broken down dams, [222] along with female elephants. He was followed by bees that were like leaders among the gandharvas. [223] O dear one! In the

water, the young women splashed him with water. They laughed and cast loving glances at him. Completely satisfied within himself, he played with them, like a king among elephants. Those in vimanas praised him and showered down flowers. Krishna then strolled in a grove along the banks. The breeze was fragrant with the scent of flowers that grew on land and in the water. He was surrounded by bees and by the women. He was like an intoxicated elephant, in the company of female elephants. The night dazzled because of the moon's beams. The one who makes all desires come true was constantly followed by a large number of women. Those autumn nights provide the material for poetic compositions and narrations. He enjoyed them all, but controlled all desire within himself.' [224]

The king asked, 'The illustrious lord of the universe descended in his own portion for the sake of establishing dharma and subduing anything that was contrary. He is the one who enunciated the ordinances of dharma and he is the one who protects them. O brahmana! By associating with the wives of others, how could he then act in this perverse way? O one who is excellent in vows! The lord of Yadu has accomplished all his desires. Why did he act in this reprehensible manner? What was his intention? Please sever our doubt about this.'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'The best among lords do commit the audacious act of transgressing dharma. Like the fire which devours everything, [225] those who are full of energy are not tainted by this. However, someone who is not a lord should never act in this way, not even in his mind. If a foolish person acts in this way, he will destroy himself, just as a person who is not Rudra will destroy himself if he consumes poison generated from the ocean. The words of the lords are always correct. But that is only sometimes true of their deeds. Therefore, an intelligent person should act in conformity with their words. They are accomplished in conduct and are not driven by selfish motives. O lord! Since they have no sense of ahamkara, it does not lead to any calamity or undesirable effects. He is the controller of all those who are controlled, all creatures, inferior species, mortals and the residents of heaven. Notions of what is pious and what is not pious do not apply to him. Those who have cleansed all the bonds of karma through powers of yoga

are satisfied by serving the dust of his lotus feet. Those sages act according to their wishes and are not bound down. How can there be any bondage for the one who has voluntarily assumed a physical body? He is the controller who resides within the gopis, their husbands and all those with bodies. For the sake of his pastimes, he has assumed a body. He assumed a human body to show favour to his devotees. He engages in such pastimes so that those who hear about it become devoted to him. Since they were confounded by Krishna's maya, the residents of Vraja did not become inimical towards him. They thought that their own respective wives were with them, by their sides. When *brahma muhurta* [226] was over, Vasudeva instructed the unwilling gopis, who loved the illustrious one, to return to their own homes. In this way, Vishnu sported with the maidens of Vraja. If a person listens to it faithfully or describes it, he develops great devotion towards the illustrious one. Within a short period of time, such a persevering person drives away desire and all the other ailments of the heart.'

Chapter 10(34)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Once, the cowherds were eager to go on a trip to visit the god. [227] They yoked bulls to their carts and left for Ambika's forest. O king! They bathed in the Sarasvati there. With the appropriate objects, they worshipped the lord and god Pashupati and the goddess Ambika. They respectfully gave brahmanas cows, gold, garments, honey and food mixed with honey. All of them said, "Let the god be pleased with us." The immensely fortunate Nanda, Sunandaka and others spent the night on the banks of the Sarasvati. They observed a vow of subsisting only on water. A giant serpent appeared in that desolate forest. It was extremely hungry. Roaming around as it willed, the serpent arrived there and started to swallow Nanda, who was asleep. As he was being devoured by the snake, he screamed, "O Krishna! O son! O Krishna! This snake is devouring me. I am seeking refuge with you. Please free me." Hearing his screams, the cowherds suddenly woke up. They were bewildered to see him being de-

voured. They struck the snake with flaming torches. Though it was scorched by the firebrands, the serpent did not let him go. The illustrious lord of the Satvatas arrived and touched it with his foot. The touch of the illustrious and prosperous one's foot removed everything inauspicious.

'It abandoned the form of a snake and assumed the form of a worshipped vidyadhara. The resplendent being stood before him, with his head bowed down. He was adorned with a golden necklace. Hrishikesha asked him. "Who are you? You are supreme and radiant in your prosperity, extraordinary to behold. How were you rendered incapable and made to assume this condemned state?" The snake replied, "I am a vidyadhara and used to be known by the name of Sudarshana. I was prosperous, handsome and opulent. I used to roam the directions in my vimana. Proud of my beauty, I laughed at rishis of the Angiras lineage, because they were malformed. Because of my own wicked deed, they made me assume a status as this particular species. They were compassionate by nature and have actually done me a favour through the curse. After all, the preceptor of the worlds has touched me with his foot and has destroyed everything inauspicious. You are the one who dispels fear and those who are scared of samsara seek refuge with you. You are the dispeller of distresses. Through the touch of your feet, I have been freed from the curse. I seek your permission to leave. O great yogi! O great being! O lord of the virtuous! O god! O lord of all the lords of the worlds! Please grant me permission. O Achyuta! As soon as I saw you, I have been instantly freed from the curse of the brahmanas. Chanting your name and hearing it, instantly purifies the reciter and the hearer. What need be said about someone who has been touched by your feet?" Having obtained his permission, Sudarshana honoured and circumambulated Dasharha. He left for heaven. Nanda was also freed from his hardship. The minds of the residents of Vraja were astonished to witness Krishna's great powers. O king! Having completed their rituals, they returned to Vraja, respectfully talking about this along the journey.

'On one occasion, in the midst of the women of Vraja, Govinda and Rama, extraordinary in valour, were sporting in the forest in the night. The women, bound to them in affection, sung about them in enchanting tones.

They [228] were ornamented and smeared all over their limbs. They wore garlands and sparkling garments. They applauded the beginning of the night, when the lord of the stars and the stars arose. A gentle breeze blew, bearing the fragrance of jasmine and night lotuses, intoxicating the bees. The two of them sang together, bringing everything auspicious to the minds and the ears of all creatures. Their melody covered the entire scale of all musical notes. O king! Hearing the singing, the gopis lost their senses. They did not realize that their fine garments were slipping and that the garlands on their hair were getting dislodged. As they wished, the two of them sported and sang in this way, as if they were intoxicated. Dhanda had a companion named Shankhachuda and he arrived there. O king! While the two of them looked on, he fearlessly started to drive the screaming women, as if they were without a protector, in a northern direction. They were like cows seized by bandits and screamed, "O Krishna! O Rama!" Seeing that their own followers were being taken away, the two brothers rushed after him. Those two spirited ones grabbed *sala* trees in their hands and shouted, "Do not be afraid." They quickly approached the worst of the *guhyaka*s, [229] who was hurriedly trying to run away. He saw that they were about to reach him, like destiny and death. Therefore, the foolish one became anxious. Wishing to save his own life, he let the women go and started to flee. Wherever he ran, Govinda followed him there. He desired to take away the jewel from his head. Bala remained there, protecting the women. Within a short distance, the lord reached the evil-souled one. He struck him on the head with a blow of his fist and severed his head, along with the jewel that was on it. He killed Shankhachuda and gathered the shining jewel. While the women looked on, he lovingly gave it to his elder brother.'

Chapter 10(35)

Shri-Shuka said, 'When Krishna left for the forest, the minds of the gopis followed him. They spent those days in misery and sang about Krishna's pastimes.

‘The gopis said, “He rests his left cheek on his left arm. His eyebrows dance as he places the flute against his lips. He uses his delicate fingers to stop the holes in it. That is how Mukunda makes it vibrate. Along with the Siddhas, there are women who are travelling through the sky in their vehicles. They are amazed and listen to it. Since their minds thus get attracted to the path of desire, they are ashamed. They are filled with lassitude and forget that their girdles are being loosened. O women! Hear this wonderful account. His smile is as dazzling as a necklace. The fickle lightning [230] is fixed on his chest. When Nanda’s son plays on his flute, he brings pleasure to people who are afflicted. From a distance, the herds of bulls, deer and cows in Vraja hear the melody of the flute and lose their senses. They hold mouthfuls of grass in their mouths and prick up their ears. They remain stationary there, as if they are asleep, or as if they have been drawn in a painting. Sometimes, he attires himself in the garb of a wrestler and imitates him. He is decorated with peacock feathers, minerals and leaves from a *palasha* tree. O friends! Sometimes, along with Bala and the gopas, he summons the cows. This is what Mukunda does. The rivers lose their currents, as if they want to touch the dust on his lotus feet when it is borne along by the breeze. However, like us, they are limited in their good deeds. They stop their waters and out of love for him, wave their arms around. [231] His valour has been properly described by his followers. He is the original being and his powers do not change. He is the one who always uses his flute to summon the cows that are grazing in the forest, on the slopes of the mountain and along the banks. The creepers and trees in the forest have Vishnu inside them. They display the abundance of their flowers and fruits. The trees bend down with the burden. Their bodies filled with joy and love, they showered forth flows of honey. The tilaka and the garland of flowers is worth seeing. There is the divine scent of tulasi. Maddened by the honey, the swarms of bees sing loudly. He acknowledges this and places the flute against his lips. The beautiful music steals the hearts of the cranes, swans and other birds in the lakes. Their minds wish to worship Hari. They close their eyes and silently meditate on him. He playfully wears a wreath on his head. Along with Bala, he stands on the summits of the mountain. O beautiful ones from

Vraja! The one who delights with the sound of his flute brings delight and joy to the entire universe. The cloud is scared of his great prowess and therefore, the response of its thunder is extremely gentle. He is its friend and it showers down flowers on him. Like an umbrella, it casts its shadow over him. O virtuous one! [232] Your son is accomplished in all the tasks that gopas undertake. He has himself developed many skills in playing the flute. He places the flute against his lips, which are like bimba fruit, and produces all the different kinds of notes—high, medium and low. When they hear this, the heads and the hearts of the lords among the gods, Shakra, Sharva and Parameshthi as the foremost, bow down. Unable to determine its essence, they are confused. The soles of his lotus feet bear the varied marks of a standard, the vajra, a lotus and an elephant's goad. His footprints on the grounds of Vraja heal the hurt left by the marks of hooves. As he plays on the flute and moves, his stride is like that of a king among elephants. When he walks, he casts playful glances at us and ignites torrents of passion in us. We are filled with lassitude and do not realize that the braids in our hair and our garments have got dishevelled. Sometimes, when he counts the cows, he wears a jewel and a garland of tulasi, especially loved by him. Sometimes, as he sings, he rests an arm on the shoulder of a beloved friend who is following him. Sometimes, with their hearts stolen by the sounds of the flute, female black antelopes, the wives of male black antelopes, follow him. Like gopis, the does follow that ocean of all the qualities and forget their homes and their hopes. He wears wreaths of kunda flowers and colourful attire. Along the Yamuna, he is surrounded by gopas and the wealth of cattle. O unblemished one! He is your son and that of Nanda. He sports and plays with the companions he loves. An agreeable and pleasant breeze blows. It bears the fragrance of sandalwood and honours him with its touch. *Bandi*s [233] and many minor divinities surround him, rendering music, singing and other offerings. Compassionate towards Vraja and the cattle, he held up the mountain. At the end of the day, he returns with the entire wealth of cows, playing on the flute. Aged ones stand along the path, worshipping his feet and chanting his deeds. The hooves raise a dust and smudge his garland. His complexion is affected by the exhaustion. Never-

theless, his appearance is like a festival. Desiring to satisfy the wishes of his well-wishers, he is the moon that has arisen from Devaki's womb. His eyes roll a little from the intoxication. Vanamali [234] honours his own well-wishers. His face is pale, like the fruits of a jujube tree. His tender cheeks are rendered radiant by the glitter of his golden earrings. The lord of the Yadus sports like a king among elephants. At the end of the day, his cheerful face is like the lord of the night. [235] It drives away the heat of the day, which the residents of Vraja and the cows find very difficult to tolerate."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'O king! In this way, the women of Vraja sang about Krishna's pastimes and every day, found pleasure in this. The hearts and minds of those immensely fortunate ones were immersed in him.'

Chapter 10(36)

Shri-Shuka said, 'After this, an asura in the form of a bull, Arishta, arrived in the settlement. It possessed a gigantic hump. It tore up the ground with its hooves and made the earth tremble. It bellowed in an extremely harsh tone and scratched the ground with its hooves. It raised its tail and tore up the embankments with the tips of its horns. It released a little bit of urine. It released a little bit of excrement. It stood there, glaring with its eyes. O dear one! That harsh and cruel sound echoed. Terrified, cows and women miscarried and delivered ahead of their time. Taking its hump to be a mountain, clouds gathered around it. On seeing its sharp horns, gopas and gopis were frightened. O king! The animals were scared and ran away, abandoning Gokula. "O Krishna! O Krishna!" Exclaiming this, all of them sought refuge with Govinda. The illustrious one saw that Gokula was scared and was fleeing. "Do not be scared." Uttering these words of assurance, he challenged the asura in the form of a bull. "O foolish one! O wicked one! Why are you scaring the cowherds and the animals? I am here to chastise wicked and evil-souled ones like you." Saying this, Achyuta slapped his arms. Hari stood there, extending his arm, which was like a serpent, on the shoulder of a friend. He clapped his hands and enraged Arishta with the sound. Arishta

was enraged in this way and scratched on the ground with its hooves. It raised its tail and drove away the clouds. Then it angrily rushed towards Krishna. It pointed the tips of its fierce horns in his direction and glared at Achyuta with blood-shot eyes. It cast sidelong glances and quickly rushed forward, like the vajra released by Indra. The illustrious one seized it by the horns and pushed it back eighteen steps, just as an elephant does against a rival elephant. Thus repulsed by the illustrious one, it soon arose again. It was breathing heavily and perspiring all over its body. Senseless with rage, it attacked again. As it rushed forward, he seized it by the horns and flung it down on the ground. Pressing down with one foot, he wrung it like a wet piece of cloth. He pulled out one of the horns and struck it with this, so that it fell down. It vomited blood and discharged urine and excrement. It kicked its legs and its eyes rolled around. Suffering all this pain, it then went to death's abode. Praising Hari, the gods showered down flowers. When he thus killed the bull, he was praised by the brahmanas. He entered the settlement with Bala, bringing delight to the eyes of the gopis.

'When the daitya Arishta was killed, Narada, who possessed divine sight, went and told Kamsa about Krishna's extraordinary deeds. "Yashoda's child was a daughter and Krishna is Devaki's son. Rama is Rohini's son. Scared, Vasudeva entrusted them with his own friend, Nanda. It is these two who have killed your men." [236] Hearing this, the lord of Bhoja was filled with rage. His senses were in a whirl. With a desire to kill Vasudeva, he picked up a sharp sword. Narada restrained him, since it was his two sons who would bring about his death. But knowing this, he bound him [237] and his wife up in iron chains. When the *devarshi* [238] had left, Kamsa summoned Keshi. He despatched him with the order that he should kill Rama and Keshava. He then summoned his advisers, Mushtika, Chanura, Shala, Toshala and others. The king of the Bhojas also summoned the keepers of elephants. He told them, "O brave Mushtika and Chanura! Listen to my words. The sons of Anakadundubhi are residing in Nanda's Vraja. It has been destined that my death will be at the hands of Rama and Krishna. When they have been brought here, you must kill them in a bout of wrestling. Erect a wrestling arena, with many kinds of galleries. Let all the inhabitants of the

city and the countryside see and voluntarily participate in the competition. O Mahamatra! O keeper of the elephant! O fortunate one! Convey the elephant Kuvalayapida to the gate of the arena. Let it kill the two who will cause me injury. With all the rites, let everything commence on the fourteenth lunar day with the sacrifice involving the bow. Let animals be offered in sacrifice to the lord of the *bhuta*s, the one who confers benedictions." [239] Having instructed them in this way, he summoned Akrura, the bull among the Yadus, who knew about accomplishing objectives.

'Taking his hand in his hand, he told him, "O lord of generous ones! [240] Out of respect, do a good deed for me. Among the Bhojas and the Vrishnis, there is no one else who is as interested in my welfare. O amiable one! Therefore, I am depending on you as a person who can accomplish an important task. This is just as the lord Indra took succour with Vishnu for accomplishing his own objective. Go to Nanda's Vraja. The sons of Anakadundubhi reside there. Without any delay, take this chariot and bring them here. Seeking refuge with Vaikuntha, the gods have sent them here for my death. Bring them here and also bring Nanda and the other gopas, with a tribute of gifts. When they have been brought here, I will have them killed by the elephant, which is like Death. Should they escape, they will be killed by my two wrestlers, who are as quick as lightning. When they have been slain, I will kill their lamenting relatives among the Vrishnis, Bhojas and Dasharhas, with Vasudeva as the foremost. I will also kill my aged father, Ugrasena, who desires the kingdom. I will kill his brother, Devaka, who harbours enmity towards me. O friend! All the thorns will then have been removed from this earth. Jarasandha is my senior [241] and Dvivida is my beloved friend. Shambara, Naraka and Bana have fraternal alliances with me. I will use them to kill all the kings who are allied with the gods and enjoy the earth. Now that you have understood this, quickly go and fetch the two boys, Rama and Krishna. Let them see the sacrifice of the bow and the prosperity of the capital of the Yadus." Akrura replied, "O king! You have thought of a perfect means to ward off your misfortune. However, one must act with indifference towards success or failure. The fruits of any effort depend on destiny. A man may act according to his wishes, but they are

thwarted by destiny. He can thus be faced with either joy or misery. But I will do what you have commanded me to." Having instructed Akrura in this way, Kamsa dismissed his ministers. He entered his house and Akrura also went to his own home.'

Chapter 10(37)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Keshi had been sent by Kamsa. It was a gigantic horse, with the speed of thought. It ripped up the ground with its hooves. The hair on its mane drove away the clouds and the multitude of vimanas from the sky. It scared everyone with its neighing. The illustrious one saw that it was terrifying his own Gokula with its neighing. It was dispelling the clouds by the whirling of the hair on its tail. He himself came forward, searching it out. He challenged it and it roared like a lion. On seeing him standing in front, it rushed forward in rage. It seemed to swallow up the sky with its mouth. It was impossible to assail, terrible in its speed and impossible to withstand. With its hind legs, it struck out at the lotus-eyed one. Adhoksha-ja stepped aside and deceived it. He angrily used his arms to seize it by its hind legs. Contemptuously, he flung it away to a distance of one hundred bow-lengths, just as Tarkshya's son [242] would do to a serpent. He then stood there. Once it had regained its senses, Keshi arose again. It angrily opened its mouth and rushed towards Hari. However, he smiled and thrust his left arm into the gaping mouth, just as a serpent enters its hole. As soon as they touched the illustrious one's arm, Keshi's teeth fell out, as if they had touched hot molten iron. Inside its body, the great-souled one's arm extend-ed in size, like a disease that has been neglected. Krishna's arm expanded and stopped its breathing. It flung its legs around. Its body perspired and its eyes rolled around. It fell down lifeless on the ground, releasing excrement. Its body was like *karkatika* fruit. [243] When it was killed, the mighty-armed one withdrew his arm. He was not at all surprised that he had managed to kill his enemy in this way. The gods worshipped him by showering down flowers.

‘O king! The devarshi, supreme among devotees of the illustrious one, approached. He privately spoke to Krishna, the performer of unblemished deeds. “O Krishna! O one whose atman is immeasurable! O Krishna! O lord of yoga! O lord of the universe! O Vasudeva, who resides in everything! O foremost among the Satvatas! O lord! You alone are the atman who is in all creatures. You are the creator and you are like the fire in the kindling. You are hidden inside the core of the heart. You are the witness. You are the lord and the great being. You are the refuge of all atmans. Earlier, using your maya, you created the gunas. Your resolution is the truth. You are the lord of creation, preservation and destruction. You have now descended among the creatures on earth, in order to crush the daityas and the rakshasas. You have descended for their destruction and for the protection of the virtuous. It is good fortune that you toyed with and killed the daitya that was in the form of a horse. Its neighing was so terrifying that the gods abandoned their world in heaven. O lord! Day after tomorrow, during the day, I will see that Chanura, Mushtika and other wrestlers, the elephant and Kamsa have been killed by you. After that, you will kill Shankha, Yavana, Mura and Naraka. [244] After that, you will defeat Indra and steal the *parijata*. After that, with the characteristics of *viryashulka*, [245] you will marry the daughters of the valiant ones. O lord of the universe! In Dvaraka, you will free Nriga from his curse. [246] You will get the Syamantaka jewel and a wife. You will restore the brahmana’s dead son to his own abode. After this, there will be the slaying of Poundraka, the burning down of the city of Kashi and the slaying of Dantavakra and the king of Chedi in the great sacrifice. While residing in Dvaraka, there will be many brave deeds that you will undertake. I will witness what you do and the poets on earth will sing about them. I will then see you in the form of the destroyer, time. I will see you as Arjuna’s charioteer, slaughtering the *akshouhini*s. [247] You are full of pure vijnana. You are based in your own nature. You have already accomplished all your objectives. Your wishes are always fulfilled. Through your own energy, you always withdraw from maya and the flow of the gunas. Let us approach the illustrious one. You are the self-contained lord. Through your own maya, you have devised all the different kinds of creation. You have now assumed a human

body to carry out your pastimes. I bow down to the greatest in the Yadu, Vrishni and Satvata lineages." Thus, the sage who was supreme among the devotees of the illustrious one bowed down before Krishna, the lord of Yadu. Delighted at having seen him, he took his permission and left. The illustrious Govinda killed Keshi in the encounter. Along with the other joyous cowherds, he tended to the animals and brought happiness to Vraja.

'On one occasion, they were herding the animals and wandering around on the slopes of the mountain. They played hide-and-seek. Some of them pretended to be thieves and the others pretended to be guards. O king! Some acted the role of thieves, others the role of guards and still others the role of sheep. They played there, without any fear. Maya's son was Vyoma and he was great in his use of maya. He donned the garb of a cowherd. He stole almost all those who were in the form of sheep and many who were in the form of thieves. The great asura took them away. Having taken them away, he hurled them into a cave in the mountain and blocked the entrance with a boulder. Finally, only four or five were left. Krishna, the refuge of all those who are virtuous, got to know what he had done. While he was taking the gopas away, he seized him, the way an energetic lion seizes a wolf. The powerful one assumed his own form and it was like an Indra among mountains. But though he tried to free himself, he was incapacitated in that grasp and was unable to do so. Achyuta seized him in his arms and flung him down on the ground. While the gods in heaven looked on, he killed him, the way one kills an animal. He smashed the boulder in front of the cave and released the gopas from their hardship. Praised by the gods and the gopas, he entered his own Gokula.'

Chapter 10(38)

Shri-Shuka said, 'The immensely intelligent Akrura spent the night in Madhu's city. He then mounted his chariot and left for Nanda's Gokula. Along the road, he was filled with great devotion towards the illustrious and lotus-eyed one. He thought in the following way. "What auspicious deeds

have I done? What supreme austerities have I tormented myself with? What worship or donations have I done? Why will I be able to see Keshava today? I think that being able to see Uttamashloka is extremely difficult for me. It is just like a person born as a shudra, addicted to material objects, being able to chant about the brahman. But enough of this. Even a wicked person like me will be able to see Achyuta. A person who is borne along by the river of time may sometimes be able to reach the bank. Today, all that is inauspicious in me has been destroyed. My birth has yielded results. I will meditate on the illustrious one's lotus feet, contemplated by yogis. Indeed, Kamsa has shown me a favour today. He has sent me to see Hari's lotus feet. He has taken the form of an avatara. Earlier, using the radiance of his circle of toenails, people have crossed the darkness that is so very difficult to cross. They are worshipped by Brahma, Bhava and the other gods, the goddess Shri, the sages and the Satvatas. Using those, along with his followers, he roams around in the forest, herding the cows. They are smeared with kunkuma from the breasts of the gopis. I will certainly see his beautiful cheeks and nose, his smiling glances and his red lotus eyes. Mukunda's face is covered with curly locks of hair. The deer are circumabulating me. [248] As a result of his own wishes, Vishnu has assumed a human form to reduce the burden of the earth. He is the abode of beauty and I will be able to see him today. Therefore, it is not true that my eyes will not be successful. [249] He is the witness of cause and effect, but he is free from ahamkara. Through his own energy, he dispels all tamas and confusion. It can be deduced that using the glances of his own maya, he fashioned the breaths of life, the senses, intelligence and the abodes [250] they reside in. He destroys everything that is a sin. He is extremely auspicious. His qualities, deeds and births ornament and purify the universe and confer life, and varied words describe them. However, if words do not describe them, it is held that they are like decorations on a dead body. He has descended in the lineage of the Satvatas to delight the noble immortals, who are the guardians of the ordinances he has propounded. The lord resides in Vraja and extends his fame. He is the one who brings auspiciousness to everyone and the gods sing about him. He is certainly the greatest destination and preceptor. He is

loved by the three worlds and is a source of great delight to the eyes. The form that he displays is one that is desired by Shri. Since I have been witnessing extremely good omens since dawn, I will see him. I will immediately descend from my chariot. I will seek out the feet of those two lords, the foremost among beings. For the sake of their own self-realization, yogis fix their intelligences on them. I will certainly bow down before them, along with their friends and the other residents of the forest. When I prostrate myself at the base of his lotus feet, the lord will place his own lotus hand on my head. Men, who are greatly agitated by the powerful serpent that is time, seek refuge with him and he grants freedom from fear. By offering worship to him, Koushika [251] and Bali obtained the status of being Indra over the three worlds. His touch is as fragrant as a *sougandhika* flower [252] and, during pastimes, wipes away the exhaustion of the women of Vraja. Though I have been sent as a messenger by Kamsa, he is the one who sees everything in the universe. Therefore, Achyuta's intelligence will not be such that he regards me as an enemy. He is the *kshetrajna* [253] who is inside and outside every heart. Therefore, he will glance at me with a pure vision. With hands joined in salutation, I will remain at the base of his lotus feet. He will glance at me with smiling and affectionate eyes. All my sins will instantly be destroyed. I will enjoy intense bliss and be bereft of every kind of sorrow. My divinity will think of me as the best among well-wishers and relatives. He will embrace me in his mighty arms. He will immediately make my atman like a tirtha. Consequently, all my bondage of karma will be loosened. Having obtained that physical contact with him, I will join my hands in salutation and prostrate myself. The one who is extensive in his fame will address me as Akrura. At that instant, my taking birth will become glorious. If a person is not honoured in this way, he should be ashamed of his birth. He does not love anyone, nor is anyone best among his well-wishers. There is no one whom he does not love. There is no one whom he hates, or is indifferent towards. However, the tree of the gods yields fruits to those who resort to it. In that way, as they deserve, his devotees receive reciprocal treatment. When I stand before him, hands joined in salutation, and bowed down, his elder brother, supreme among the Yadus,

will smile and embrace me. Displaying all signs of respect, he will make me enter the house. He will ask about what Kamsa has done to his own relatives." Thus, Shvaphalka's son [254] thought about Krishna along the journey. O king! On his chariot, he reached Gokula when the sun was atop Mount Asta.

'In the settlement, he saw the earth marked with the wonderful signs of the lotus, the barley, the elephant goad and other marks. These are the footprints and the unblemished dust from the feet that all the guardians of the world bow down their diadems before. On seeing this, his joy and respect was enhanced. Because of his love, his body hair stood up and tears started to flow from his eyes. He got down from the chariot and rolled around on the ground, exclaiming, "This is the dust from my lord's feet." This is the objective of all those who have bodies, to give up pride, fear and grief and see and hear about Hari's signs. Because of the order, [255] he experienced this. He saw Krishna and Rama in Vraja. They had gone to milk the cows. They were respectively dressed in yellow and blue garments and their eyes were like autumn lotuses. They were young [256] and their respective complexions were dark blue and fair. They were the abodes of Shri and were mighty-armed. Their faces were excellent and they were supreme among handsome ones. Their strength and valour was like that of elephants. Their feet were marked with the signs of a standard, a vajra, an elephant goad and a lotus. With compassionate and smiling glances, those two great-souled ones beautified the area. Their pastimes were attractive and generous. They wore garlands and other garlands made out of wild flowers. They were smeared with auspicious pastes. Having bathed, they were dressed in sparkling garments. O lord of the earth! Those two foremost among beings, Bala and Keshava, were the cause behind the universe and had descended in their own portions for the sake of the world. O king! Through their own radiance, they dispelled the darkness of the directions. They were respectively like a mountain made out of emeralds and a mountain made out of silver, both encrusted in gold. Akrura quickly descended from his chariot and was flooded with love. Like a rod, he prostrated himself before the feet of Rama and Krishna. On seeing the illustrious one, he was filled with delight and

there were tears in his eyes. O king! The body hair on his limbs stood up. He was so eager that he wasn't even able to explain who he was. The illustrious one recognized him. He was devoted to the ones who loved him. Pleased, he drew him close with a hand that was marked with the sign of the chakra and embraced him. He was bowing down and the great-minded Samkarshana held his hands in his own hands. With his younger brother, he led him home. He asked about his welfare and welcomed him. He offered him an excellent seat. Observing the rites, he washed his feet and respectfully offered him *madhuparka*. [257] He offered the guest a cow and respectfully massaged him, so as to remove his exhaustion. The lord devotedly offered him food that could be offered, with many qualities. Rama knew about supreme dharma. When he had eaten, he happily gave him mouth fresheners and fragrant garlands and made other arrangements, so that he might obtain great delight. When he had been honourably treated, Nanda asked him, "O Dasharha! How have you been? How have you survived under the oppressive Kamsa? You are like sheep being maintained by a butcher. The evil assassin has killed the children of his own sister, while she shrieked. Indeed, you are his subjects. How can we even ask about your welfare?" He was thus honoured by Nanda in these extremely well-spoken words of inquiry. Akrura recovered from the exhaustion of the journey.'

Chapter 10(39)

Shri-Shuka said, 'He was happily seated on a couch and greatly honoured by Rama and Krishna. He obtained all the wishes that he had cherished along the journey. O king! The illustrious one is Shri's abode. If he is pleased, what can not be obtained? Therefore, those who are devoted to him do not wish for anything else. When the evening meal was over, Devaki's illustrious son asked about how Kamsa had behaved vis-à-vis the relatives and about what he intended to do.

'The illustrious one said, "O father! [258] O fortunate one! Welcome. It is good fortune that you have come. Are our relatives and kin free from physi-

cal and mental pain? However, though he goes by the name of maternal uncle, Kamsa is the disease in our family. As long as he prospers, why should we ask about the welfare of our relatives and their offspring? [259] Alas! Because of me, my noble parents had to undergo a lot of suffering. Because of me, their sons had to die. They were also imprisoned because of that reason. O amiable one! It is good fortune that we have seen a relative like you today. O father! Describe how this has come about. Why have you come?"'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'When the illustrious one asked, Madhava [260] described everything—the bond of enmity towards the Yadus and the attempt to kill Vasudeva. He conveyed the message and the reason why he had himself been sent as a messenger, about how Narada had recounted his own birth as Anakadundubhi's son. Hearing Akrura's words, Krishna and Bala, the slayers of enemy heroes, laughed and told their father, Nanda, about the king's command. He [261] commanded the gopas, "Gather all the milk products. Take gifts. Let the carts be yoked. We will leave for Madhu's city tomorrow and give the king the milk products. We will witness the extremely great festival. The residents of the countryside are going." In his own Gokula, Nanda gopa had such an announcement made by his governor. When the gopis heard that Akrura had come to Vraja to take Rama and Krishna to the city, they were extremely distressed. Some were tormented in their hearts and sighed, the beauty on their faces faded. For others, their garments were loosened. Their bangles were dislodged and the braids of their hair were dishevelled. Others gave up everything else that they were doing and meditated on him. Like those who have gone to the world of the atman, they did not know what was going on in this world. Others remembered Shouri's affection and smiles. His wonderfully phrased words had touched their hearts and the women lost their senses. They thought about his extremely charming deeds, his gentle and smiling glances, the pastimes that destroyed all misery and his mighty exploits. Immersed in Achyuta and with tears in their eyes, they collectively assembled and spoke.

'The gopis said, "Alas! O creator! There is no compassion in you. You bring embodied beings together, in friendship and love. However, before they have accomplished their objectives, you unnecessarily separate them.

This pastime of yours is like a child's game. You have shown us Mukunda's face, framed by curly hair, with excellent cheeks and a tall nose. The slightest bit of his enchanting smile dispels all grief. You are not acting well. You are acting so that we can no longer see it. Under the name of Akrura, you are extremely cruel. [262] Having given us our eyes, like an ignorant person, you are now taking them away. It is with those that we saw the beauty of all your creation, in the form of Madhu's slayer. The affection of Nanda's son is temporary in nature. He does not see us, though we are afflicted on his account. We gave up our homes, our own relatives, our sons and our husbands. However, he is now attached to the gopas, his new loves. The happy morning that follows this night will truly bring benedictions to the women of the city. The lord of Vraja will enter it and they will drink the intoxicating drink of smiling and sidelong glances from his face. Their speech is as sweet as honey. O women! Though Mukunda is devoted to his own, their bashful smiles will entice and confuse him. His mind will be captivated. How can he again return to village women? When they see him, it is now certain that there will be a great festival for the Dasharhas, Bhojas, Andhakas, Vrishnis and Satvatas. He is Shri's pleasure and is a store of all the qualities. They will see Devaki's son travel along the road. This one may be named Akrura, but he is not compassionate. He is exceedingly cruel. He is not comforting those who are extremely miserable. He is taking away the one whom we love more than everything else, from beyond our range of vision. His heart does not melt. He has ascended the chariot. These insolent gopas are also hurrying after him in their carts. The elders are indifferent. Today, destiny is working against us. Let us approach Madhava and restrain him. What can the elders of the families and the relatives do? It is impossible to tolerate separation from Mukunda for even half a *nimesha*. [263] Destiny has caused this separation and our hearts are distressed. O gopis! He brought us to the rasa in the assembly, with his love, pastimes, charming smiles, sweet conversation, playful glances and embraces. With him, the nights were like a kshana. How can we be separated from him? How will we cross this darkness, which is extremely difficult to surmount? When the day was over, Ananta's friend [264] would enter Vraja, surrounded by the

gopas. The dust from the hooves would cover his hair and his garlands. He would play on his flute and look at us with smiling and sidelong glances, captivating our minds. How can we remain without him?"'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'Severely suffering from the separation, the women of Vraja spoke in this way, their minds attached to Krishna. Casting aside all shame, they wept in loud voices. "O Govinda! O Damodara! O Madhava!" While the women were weeping in this way, the sun arose. Having performed the morning rites, Akrura urged the chariot. In their carts, Nanda and the other gopas followed him, having collected milk products in a large number of pitchers. With their minds fixed on their beloved Krishna, the gopis also followed. Then they stood there, wishing that the illustrious one should instruct them. The supreme among Yadus saw that they were tormented at his own departure. Using messengers, he lovingly comforted them, "I will return." When he had left, the gopis stood there like figures etched on a painting, as long as the standard and the dust of his chariot could be seen. Without any hope that Govinda would return, they then retreated. To dispel their sorrow, they spent the days in singing about their beloved's deeds.

'O king! The chariot moved with the speed of the wind and the illustrious one, Rama and Akrura arrived at the Kalindi, the destroyer of sins. He touched and drank the sweet water, which sparkled like a jewel. Along with Rama, he went to a clump of trees and mounted the chariot. [265] Akrura asked them to be seated on the chariot. Taking their permission, he followed the prescribed rites and went and had a bath in a pool in the Kalindi. He immersed himself in those water and chanted the name of the eternal brahman. Akrura saw that Rama and Krishna were in front of him, together. "Anakadundubhi's two sons were astride the chariot. How can they be here? If they are here, they cannot be on the chariot." Thinking this, he arose from the water. However, he saw them seated there on the chariot, as they had been earlier. "When I saw the two of them in the water, wasn't that true?" Therefore, he submerged himself again and saw the lord of the serpents [266] there, being praised by the Siddhas, the charanas, the gandharvas and the asuras, their heads bowed down. The god possessed one thousand

heads and one thousand diademed hoods. He was dressed in a blue garment, which sparkled like a white lotus's fibres. He was stationed there, like a white mountain. [267] There was another being on his lap and he was attired in yellow silk garments. He was serene and four-armed. His red eyes were like the petals of a lotus. His pleasant face was beautiful. His glance was smiling and enchanting. He possessed excellent eyebrows, a tall nose, handsome ears, excellent cheeks and red lips. His long arms were mighty. His shoulders were raised and Shri was on his chest. His neck was like a conch shell and his navel was deep. His stomach was lined, like a leaf. His hips and loins were large and his well-formed thighs were like those of an elephant. He possessed beautiful knees and calves. His raised ankles reflected the light from the cirele of his toenails, with delicate toes [268] and lotus feet. He was adorned with extremely expensive jewels, a diadem, bracelets, armlets, a girdle, a sacred thread, a necklace, anklets and earrings. In his hands, his resplendent form held a lotus, a conch shell, a chakra and a mace. The shrivatsa mark was on his chest, as was the radiant Koustubha gem. He wore a garland of wild flowers. Separately, with their own respective sentiments and words and with unblemished souls, he was being worshipped by his attendants, Sunanda and Nanda being the foremost, Sanaka and the others, the lords of the gods like Brahma, Rudra and the others, the nine supreme brahmanas [269] and Prahlada, Narada, Vasu [270] and other foremost ones among the illustrious one's devotees. Divinities like Shri, Pushti, Gira, Kanti, Kirti, Tushti, Ila, Urja, Vidya, Avidya, Shakti and Maya attended upon him. [271] On seeing this, he was greatly delighted and filled with supreme devotion. His body hair stood up in joy and, overwhelmed by the sentiments, his eyes were filled with tears. Satvata [272] regained his composure and controlled himself. He joined his hands in salutation and prostrated himself. In a faltering voice, he slowly uttered words of praise.'

Chapter 10(40)

‘Akrura said, “I bow down to you. You are the cause behind all causes. You are Narayana, the original and undecaying being. Brahma appeared from the whorl of the lotus that sprouted from your navel and all the worlds emanated from him. You are the elements, space, water, fire, wind and the earth and the other, [273] Mahat, that which is not born and the other, [274] the mind, the senses, all the objects of the senses and all the divinities who preside over the senses. You are the cause behind the universe and everything has originated from your limbs. You are the atman and Aja [275] and the others do not know your true form. They have been seized by what is not the atman. Aja is bound by the gunas of that which has not been born. [276] He does not know your true form, which is beyond that of the gunas. Virtuous yogis worship you as the lord and great being, the one who presides over the *adhidaivika, adhibhoutika* and *adhyatmika*. [277] Some brahmanas follow the rituals of the three Vedas. Using the rituals of sacrifices, they worship you under many different forms and names. The learned worship you alone through the yajna of knowledge, as the personified form of jnana. They give up all kinds of rites. When these cease, they obtain you. There are others who follow the injunctions enunciated by you. [278] They cleanse themselves and are absorbed in you, conceiving of you as the one who has one form, but manifests himself in many different forms. There are others who accept you in Shiva’s form, following the path spoken about by Shiva. They worship the illustrious one in this form, following the different modes stated by many kinds of preceptors. In this way, all of them worship you, since you are the lord who is in all the gods. O lord! This is despite their minds being on others and they being devoted to other gods. O lord! The rivers are generated from the mountains and are filled up by rain. However, all of them enter the ocean. Like that, all the paths end with you. Sattva, rajas and tamas result from the gunas of your Prakriti. Beginning with Brahma and ending with immobile objects, everything is woven into the warf and woof of Prakriti. I bow down before you. Your vision is not attached. You are in all atmans. You are the one who witnesses all kinds of intelligence. You used ignorance to create this flow of gunas that flows through gods, humans

and inferior species. The fire is your mouth. Your feet are the earth. The sun is your eye. The sky is your navel. The directions are your ears. Heaven is your head. The Indras among the gods are your arms. The oceans are your stomach. The wind has been thought of as your breath of life and strength. The trees and plants are your body hair. The clouds are the hair on your head. The mountains are the supreme one's bones and nails. The blinking of your eye constitutes night and day. Prajapati is your genital organ and the rain is your semen. You are the undecaying Purusha, the atman. You created the worlds, with many kinds of creatures, and the protectors of these worlds. You can be fathomed through the mind. They are in you, just as aquatic creatures exist in water and insects exist in *udumbara* fruit. For the sake of your pastimes, you manifest yourself in different kinds of forms. Using those, you cleanse impurities from people and delighted, they sing about your fame. I bow down to the original cause. In the form of a fish, you swam around in the ocean of destruction. I bow down to Hayashirsha and to the slayer of Madhu and Kaitabha. I bow down to the giant tortoise that held Mandara up. I bow down to the one who assumed the form of a boar and playfully raised up the earth. I bow down to the one who assumed the extraordinary form of a lion [279] to dispel the fears of virtuous people in the world. I bow down to the dwarf form who strode across the three worlds. I bow down to the lord of the Bhrigus, [280] who severed the forest of insolent kshatriyas. I bow down before the noble Raghu, who brought an end to Ravana. I bow down to Vasudeva. I bow down to Samkarshana. I bow down to Pradyumna and Aniruddha, the lords of the Satvatas. I bow down to the pure Buddha, who will confound daityas and danavas. I bow down to the one who will assume the form of Kalki to destroy kshatriyas who will be almost like *mlechchha*s. [281] O illustrious one! This world of the living is bewildered by your maya. Grasped by notions of 'I' and 'mine', people are whirled around, along the path of karma. O lord! I am also foolish and roam around. I, my sons, my home, my wife, my wealth, my relatives and other things are actually as unreal as a dream, but my intelligence takes them to be real. Obsessed with objects that are temporary, my mind follows a contrary path and creates difficulties for me. I am immersed in the

opposite pair of sentiments and do not know that you are the one who my atman loves the most. Because water is covered by weeds, an ignorant person ignores it and chases after a mirage. In that way, I have turned away from you. My intelligence is wretched. My mind is agitated by kama and karma. I cannot check it and am dragged here and there by the powerful senses. Therefore, I have approached your lotus feet, which are extremely difficult for the wicked to approach. O lord! However, I think that because of the compassion you will show me, I can approach them. O one with a lotus in your navel! When a man's mind turns towards the service of virtuous ones, perhaps he deserves to be freed from the cycle of samsara. I bow down before the one who is the embodiment of vijnana, the cause behind all kinds of comprehension. You are Purusha. You are the lord. You are the foremost. You are the brahman. You are infinite in your powers. I bow down to Vasudeva, the refuge of all creatures. O Hrishikesha! O lord! I have surrendered myself to you. Save me."'

Chapter 10(41)

Shri-Shuka said, 'While he was being praised, the illustrious Krishna, who had displayed his form in the water, withdrew it, just as an actor ends his performance. When he [282] saw the form had vanished, he quickly arose from the water. He was amazed. He finished the necessary rites and returned to the chariot. Hrishikesha asked him, "Did you see anything extraordinary in the sky, on land, or in the water? It seems to us that you did." Akrura replied, "You are the atman of the universe. Everything extraordinary in the sky, on land, or in the water exists in you. When I have seen you, what have I not seen? O brahman! Everything extraordinary in the sky, on land, or in the water is in you. How can I have seen anything extraordinary?" Saying this, Gandini's son [283] urged the chariot and at the end of the day, along with Rama and Krishna, reached Mathura. O king! People from the villages assembled along the path. With delight, they glanced at the two sons of Vasudeva and could not withdraw their eyes. Nanda gopa

and the other residents of Vraja reached ahead of them. Having reached the city, they waited at a nearby grove for them. The illustrious one, the lord of the universe, met them. As Akrura humbly bowed down, he clasped his hand in his hand. He seemed to smile as he said, "Take the vehicle and, entering before us, go home. We will get down here. After resting, we will see the city." Akrura replied, "O lord! Without the two of you, I will not enter Mathura. O protector! O one who is devoted towards your devotees! You should not abandon me. O Adhokshaja! O best among well-wishers! Come. Let us go. Along with your elder brother, the cowherds and the well-wishers, enter the house along with the master of the house. We are householders. Purify my house with the dust of your feet. Through that purification of sins, the ancestors, the fires and the gods will be satisfied. By washing your feet, the great Bali obtained fame and unlimited prosperity. He obtained the destination meant for those who are devoted to you. The waters that emerged after bathing your feet [284] were cleansed and purified the three worlds. Sharva bore them on his head. By touching them, Sagara's sons went to heaven. O god of the gods! O protector of the universe! Hearing and singing about you is sacred. You are Uttamashloka Narayana. I bow down before you." The illustrious one said, "With my revered elder brother, I will indeed come to your house. However, I must first kill the one who hates the circle of the Yadus and bring joy to my well-wishers." When the illustrious one said this, Akrura seemed to be disheartened. He entered the city, told Kamsa that he had accomplished the task, and went home.

'In the late afternoon, along with Samkarshana and surrounded by the gopas, the illustrious one entered Mathura, so as to see the city. He saw the tall turrets made out of crystal, the large gates, the golden doors and arches, storehouses made out of copper and brass, the impenetrable moats, the beautiful gardens and the adornments of groves. There were golden crossroads, mansions and pleasure gardens. There were assembly halls for guilds [285] and other decorated houses. The panels on the windows, the platforms and floors were encrusted with lapis lazuli, crystal, sapphire, coral, pearls and emeralds. Doves and peacocks joyously called, perched on the openings in the windows. The streets, shopping places and quadrangles were

sprinkled with water, and flowers, sprouts, parched grain and unhusked rice were strewn there. The doors to the houses were decorated with pitchers filled with curds, sandalwood, flowers, rows of lamps, and fresh sprouts. There were plantain trees and betel nut trees with bunches of fruit. There were festoons of flags. Surrounded by their friends, Vasudeva's two sons entered via the royal road. To see them, the women of the city assembled quickly. O king! Eager to see them, some climbed on to the tops of the mansions. Some donned their garments or ornaments the wrong way round. Others forgot and wore only one ornament and not both. [286] Some wore only one earring on the ear, or only one anklet. Others did one eye, [287] but not the other. Some were eating their meals, but happily abandoned them, without finishing eating. Some did not finish their baths. Hearing the noise, they woke up from their sleep. Mothers were feeding their infants, but cast them aside. His valour was like that of a crazy Indra among elephants. The lotus-eyed one's form is one that brings pleasure to Shri. His bold pastimes and smiling glances stole their minds and was like a festival to their eyes. Having heard about him, their hearts had already melted towards him. They saw him now and they were honoured by his smiling glances, which were like nectar. Having seen him, they mentally embraced the embodiment of bliss. O destroyer of enemies! Their body hair stood up in joy and they abandoned the infinite store of mental distress. [288] Their lotus faces bloomed in delight and they climbed on to the tops of the mansions. Happy, they showered down flowers on Bala and Keshava. The happy brahmanas worshipped them with curds, unbroken grain, pots filled with water, garlands, fragrances and other objects of worship. The female citizens exclaimed, "What great austerities did the gopis perform? They were able to see these two, who are like great festivals in the world of men."

'Gada's elder brother [289] saw a washerman-cum-dyer come in their direction. On seeing him, he asked him for some clean and excellent garments. "O dear one! Please give us garments that are worthy of us. If you give us this, there is no doubt that you will obtain supreme prosperity." The illustrious one is complete in every possible way. However, the king's servant was extremely insolent. Thus asked, he angrily replied, "You always roam

around in mountains and forests. Do you wear these kinds of garments? You have asked for objects that belong to the king. O foolish ones! Do not ask for these. If you wish to live, quickly leave. If a person is insolent, the king's servants kill him or loot him." When he spoke in this way, Devaki's son became angry. Using the tips of his hands, he severed the washerman's head from his body. All his followers abandoned the bundles of clothes they had. All of them fled along the road and Achyuta took those garments. Krishna and Samkarshana attired themselves in two pieces of cloth that appealed to them. They distributed the remainder among the gopas and flung some away on the ground. There was a weaver who cheerfully attired them in many colourful garments, with ornaments, that were worthy of them. With many kinds of ornamented garments, Krishna and Rama were radiant. Thus decorated, they resembled two young elephants during a festival, one white, the other dark. The illustrious one was pleased with him and granted him supreme prosperity and form that would be like his own. [290] In this world, he gave him strength, prosperity, memory and sharp senses. They then went to the house of a garland maker named Sudamna. [291] On seeing them, he arose and lowered his head down on the ground. He brought seats for them and offered them, and their companions, *padya, arghya* [292] and other objects of worship, garlands, betel leaves and pastes. He said, "O lord! Through your arrival, my birth has been successful and my lineage has been purified. The ancestors, the gods and the rishis are satisfied with me. The two of you are indeed the supreme cause behind everything created in this universe. For the sake of welfare and prosperity, the two of you have descended here in your portions. You are the atman of the universe. You are well-wishers who are not partial in your vision. Though you are affectionate towards those who worship you, you are impartial towards all creatures. I am your servant. Command me. What shall I do for you? If you engage a man to do something, you show a favour towards him." O Indra among kings! Discerning their wishes, Sudama was pleased in his mind. He fashioned garlands made out of fresh and fragrant flowers and gave those to them. Thus decorated, along with their companions, Krishna and Rama were pleased. He had sought refuge with them and was bowing down be-

fore them. They granted him the best of boons. He sought the boon that he might have unwavering devotion towards the one who is the atman of everything, affection towards his devotees and supreme compassion towards all creatures. He granted him this boon and also prosperity for him and his followers, strength, lifespan, fame and beauty. With his elder brother, he then departed.'

Chapter 10(42)

Shri-Shuka said, 'After this, Madhava proceeded along the royal road. He saw a young woman. Her face was beautiful, but she was hunchbacked. She was carrying a vessel with various unguents for the body. As she was proceeding, the one who grants pleasure smiled and asked her. "O one with the beautiful thighs! Who are you? For whose body are these unguents meant? Tell us truthfully. Give us some of the excellent unguents meant for the body. You will then soon obtain supreme benefit." The *sairandhri* [293] replied, "O handsome one! I am Kamsa's servant-maid and he respects me because of my work with unguents. My name is Trivakra. [294] The lord of Bhoja loves and is attached to what I prepare. However, other than you, who deserves to have these?" She was overwhelmed at their beauty, charm, sweet smiles, conversation and glances. She gave both of them a lot of unguents. When these unguents were smeared on their bodies, they enhanced their own natural complexions. [295] Smeared in this way on the upper parts of their bodies, they were extremely radiant. The illustrious one was pleased with the hunchbacked Trivakra, whose face was beautiful. To demonstrate the fruits of seeing him, he made up his mind to make her straight. He pressed down on the front part of her feet with his feet. He raised his opened palm and held up her chin. In this way, Achyuta straightened her up. Through Mukunda's touch, she instantly became an extremely beautiful woman. Her limbs became straight and beautiful. She possessed wide hips and large breasts. She thus came to have beauty, quality and nobility, and desire was generated in her. She smiled, dragged Keshava by his

upper garment and said, “O brave one! Come. Let us go to my house. I cannot leave you here. O bull among men! You have agitated my mind. Please show me your favours.” Sought by the woman in this way, though Rama was looking on, Krishna glanced at the faces of the gopas. He laughed and replied, “O one with the excellent eyebrows! You are the one who destroys the mental distress of men. I will go to your house after I have accomplished my objective. You are the refuge for wayfarers like us.” Taking leave from her with these sweet words, he proceeded along the road. The merchants along the road worshipped him and his elder brother with many kinds of offerings, betel leaves, garlands and fragrances. Seeing him, the minds of the women were agitated and they could no longer control themselves. Their garments, braids of hair and bracelets were dislodged. They were like figures etched on a painting.

‘Achyuta asked the citizens where the bow was kept. He entered the place and saw the bow, which was as extraordinary as Indra’s bow. [296] It was supremely resplendent and was guarded by many men who were worshipping it. Though those men restrained him, Krishna forcibly seized the bow. While the men looked on, in the twinkling of an eye, he playfully raised it up in his left hand, strung it and drew it. Urukrama snapped it in the middle, just as a crazy elephant breaks a stalk of sugar cane. The sound of the bow breaking echoed in the sky, the space between heaven and earth, and in all the directions. When it filled all this up, Kamsa heard it and was terrified. The guards were enraged and wished to seize him and his companions. Those murderers exclaimed, “Let us seize them. Let us kill them.” Bala and Keshava discerned their wicked intentions. They angrily picked up the two broken parts of the bow and started to slay them. They also killed an army that had been sent by Kamsa. Emerging through the gate of the arena, they happily wandered around, looking at the riches of the city. The residents of the city witnessed their extraordinary valour, energy, boldness and beauty. They thought these two were supreme gods. As they wandered around as they willed, the sun started to set. Therefore, surrounded by the gopas, Krishna and Rama returned to the place where the carts had camped.

‘After Mukunda had left, the gopis suffered because of the separation. They had spoken about the benedictions the city of Madhu would enjoy and these came true. They saw that ornament among men, with Lakshmi ornamenting his body. Abandoning others who worshipped her, Shri sought refuge with him. After their feet had been washed, the two of them ate rice sprinkled with milk. They happily slept during the night, knowing what Kamsa desired. Kamsa heard about the breaking of the bow, the slaying of the guards and his own army and about Govinda and Rama’s supreme pastimes. The evil-minded one was scared. He remained awake for a long time and in both situations, [297] saw many evil portents, as if they were the messengers of death. Though he could see his own reflection, [298] there was no head. Though no stellar body actually possessed a mirror image, he saw them in pairs. There seemed to be holes in his shadow. He could not hear the sound of his breathing. The trees seemed to be made out of gold. He could not see his own footprints. In his sleep, he saw that he was embraced by *preta*s. [299] He was astride a vehicle drawn by donkeys and was ingesting poison. He was travelling, wearing a garland of *nalada* flowers. [300] He was naked and was smeared in oil. When he was asleep and when he was awake, he saw many other portents. He saw many other signs of death and was terrified. Because of his thoughts, he could not sleep.

‘O Kouravya! When night was over and the sun arose from the waters, Kamsa ensured that arrangements were carried out for the great festival of wrestling. The men worshipped the arena and blew on trumpets. The galleries were decorated with garlands, flags, ribbons and arches. With brahmanas and kshatriyas at the forefront, residents of the city and the countryside entered and seated themselves comfortably. Seats were earmarked for kings. Surrounded by his advisers, Kamsa seated himself in the royal gallery. Though he was seated amidst the circle of kings, his heart was trembling. The blare of trumpets was surpassed by the sound of wrestlers slapping their palms. The proud and ornamented wrestlers seated themselves, along with their instructors. Pleased and delighted by the music, Chanura, Mushtika, Kuta, Shala and Toshala entered the arena. Nanda gopa

and the other gopas had been summoned by the king of the Bhojas. They offered him their gifts and seated themselves in one of the galleries.'

Chapter 10(43)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O scorcher of enemies! Krishna and Rama performed their ablutions. They heard the sounds of the wrestlers and the kettledrums, and approached to see what was happening. Krishna approached the gate of the arena and saw the elephant Kuvalayapida stationed there, goaded by the keeper. Shouri girded up his garments and tied his curly hair. In a voice that rumbled like the clouds, he spoke to the elephant keeper. "O elephant keeper! Without any delay, step aside and allow us to pass. O elephant keeper! If you do not do so, I will send you and your elephant to Yama's abode." Thus censured, the elephant keeper became angry and goaded his angry elephant, which was like Yama, the destroyer, in Krishna's direction. The Indra among elephants rushed forwards and violently seized him in its trunk. However, he slipped out from the trunk, struck it and hid under its legs. It was angry and couldn't see Keshava, though it could smell him. It stretched out and seized him with the tip of its trunk. However, he forcibly freed himself. He seized the extremely strong animal by the tail and dragged it twenty-five bow-lengths away, just as Suparna toys with a serpent. It moved around, to the left and to the right. However, Achyuta held on to the tail and also moved around in that way, just as a boy does with a calf. Krishna then faced the elephant and struck it with his hand. He ran and it followed. But just as it was about to touch him, at every step, he made it fall down. As he ran, he playfully fell down on the ground and instantly arose. However, thinking that he had fallen down, it angrily struck the ground with its tusks. When its own valour was countered, the Indra among elephants became extremely angry. Goaded by the drivers, [301] it angrily rushed towards Krishna. As it was descending, the illustrious Madhusudana approached. He seized its trunk with a hand and flung it down on the ground. When it had fallen

down, he pressed down on it with his foot. He played like a lion and uprooted a tusk. Hari used this to slay the elephant and its keepers.

'He left the dead elephant there. With a tusk in his hand, he entered. The tusk was on his shoulder and he was smeared with drops of the elephant's musth. There were drops of his perspiration. His lotus face was radiant. O king! Baladeva and Janardana were surrounded by some gopas. Holding the tusks as excellent weapons, they entered the arena. As he entered the arena with his elder brother, each one regarded him in different ways—the wrestlers as the vajra, men as the best among men, women as the personified form of the god of love, the gopas as their relative, the wicked kings as a chastiser, his parents as their child, the lord of the Bhojas as death, the ignorant as a weak competitor, the yogis as the supreme truth and the Vrishnis as the great divinity. O king! When Kamsa saw that Kuvalayapida had been killed, he thought that they were invincible and became extremely anxious. Having reached the arena, the two mighty-armed ones were resplendent. They were attired in colourful garments, ornaments and garlands. They seemed to have donned the garb of two excellent actors. The minds of those who looked at them were agitated by their dazzle.

'O king! The residents of the city and the country, seated in the galleries, looked at those two excellent men. The outburst of joy was so overwhelming that their eyes dilated. They drank their faces in with their eyes, but were not satisfied. They seemed to drink them in with their eyes, lick them with their tongues, smell them with their noses and embrace them with their arms. They spoke to each other about what they had seen and what they had heard, his form, qualities, sweetness and bravery, as if reminding themselves. "These two are portions of the illustrious Hari Narayana himself. They have descended in Vasudeva's house. This one was born from Devaki and was conveyed to Gokula. All this while, he has secretly resided and grown up in Nanda's house. He conveyed Putana and the danava who was in the form of a whirlwind [302] to their ends. He destroyed the two arjuna trees, the guhyaka, [303] Keshi, Dhenuka [304] and others like that. He freed the cows and the cowherds from the forest conflagration. He subdued the snake Kaliya and destroyed Indra's pride. On one hand, he held up the supreme

among mountains for an entire week. He saved Gokula from the showers, storms and thunder. When they looked at his smiling face, the gopis were always delighted. As they looked, they were freed from all the different kinds of torment and exhaustion. It is said that he will make the lineage of the Yadus extremely famous. Protected by him, it will obtain prosperity, fame and greatness. His elder brother is the handsome and lotus-eyed Rama. He is the one who killed Pralamba, Vatsaka, Baka and others." [305] As the people spoke in this way, the trumpets were sounded. Chanura addressed Krishna and Rama in the following words. "O son of Nanda! O Rama! The two of you are respected as brave. Hearing that you were accomplished in wrestling, the king summoned you here, wishing to see for himself. Subjects who do what the king desires, in thoughts, words and deeds, obtain benefit for themselves. It is the contrary for those who do not act accordingly. It is evident that gopas and cowherds always find pleasure in wrestling, playing at such sports as they graze cattle in the forests. Therefore, let you and us do what will bring pleasure to the king. Since all creatures are in the king, all creatures will also be pleased with us." Krishna heard these words. He himself liked to wrestle and welcomed these words. He replied in words that were appropriate to the time and the place. "Though we roam around in the forest, we are the subjects of the lord of the Bhojas. We always do what is agreeable to him. That ensures us his great favours. We are boys and we should sport with those who are our equals in strength. Let there be no adharma and let those who have assembled in this wrestling arena be not tainted by that." Chanura replied, "You or Bala aren't children or young boys. [306] You are supreme among strong ones. You playfully killed an elephant that possessed the vigour of a thousand elephants. Therefore, you will have to fight with strong ones and there will be no violation in this. O Varshneya! Exhibit your valour against me and Bala will demonstrate it against Mushtika."'

Chapter 10(44)

Shri-Shuka said, 'When it was decided in this way, the illustrious Madhusudana made up his mind. He was paired against Chanura and Rohini's son against Mushtika. They grasped the opponent's hands with their hands and locked their feet against the opponent's feet. Wishing to be victorious, they powerfully tugged at the opponent. They struck each other—fists against fists, knees agains knees, heads against heads and chests against chests. Each dragged the opponent around in circles, shoved, crushed, flung him down on the ground, withdrew, attacked from the rear and countered the rival's moves. They raised the opponent up, carried him, or remained stationary. In the process of defeating the rival, they harmed themselves. O king! All the assembled women thought the encounter was between the relatively strong and the relatively weak. Filled with compassion, they spoke to each other in groups. "This is not good policy. The members of the royal assembly have sadly followed adharma. While the king looks on, they desire this encounter between the relatively strong and the relatively weak. On one side, there are the two wrestlers, who are like Indras among mountains. All their limbs are as firm as the vajra. On the other side, there are two young boys who have not yet become adults. Their limbs are extremely delicate. It is certain that there has been a violation of dharma in this assembly. One must never remain in a place where adharma is on the rise. Thinking of the sins committed by an assembly, a wise person should not enter the assembly. Having entered, if a man does not speak, or speaks like an ignorant person, [307] he suffers from sin. Behold Krishna's lotus face as he leaps around on all sides of the enemy. He is perspiring because of the exhaustion and it looks like drops of water on the whorl of a lotus. Are you not looking at Rama's face? His eyes are coppery red. He is full of intolerance towards Mushtika, yet that rage is beautified by his smiles. The land of Vraja is indeed sacred. The ancient Purusha has hidden himself there, disguising himself in human form and wearing a colourful garland of wild flowers. Along with Bala, he has herded the cows and has made his flute vibrate, indulging in pastimes. His feet are worshipped by Shiva and Rama. [308] What austerities have the gopas performed? They have used their eyes to drink up his

form, which constantly assumed new expressions. He is the essence of beauty and cannot be equalled or surpassed. There is nothing that can enhance his beauty. He is the only abode of fame, prosperity and opulence. This is a sight that is extremely difficult to obtain. Blessed are the women of Vraja. While milking, threshing, churning, smearing, swinging on swings, taking care of weeping infants, sprinkling, cleaning and performing other activities, their minds have been extremely attached to him and they have sung about him, with tears choking their throats. Their minds have been absorbed in Urukrama. Along with the cows, in the morning, he left Vraja and in the evening, he returned again. They could hear him play on the flute. The women quickly emerged on the road and saw his smiling face and his compassionate glances. Their store of good deeds must be great." O bull among the Bharata lineage! While the women were conversing in this way, the illustrious Hari, the lord of yoga, made up his mind to kill his enemy. Hearing the scared words of the women, the parents, filled with affection towards their sons, were grief-stricken. Since they did not know about the strength of their sons, they suffered from remorse.

'Using many kinds of techniques, Achyuta and his adversary fought against each other. In that way, Bala and Mushtika also fought against each other. The blows from the illustrious one's body descended like cruel and crushing strikes of the vajra on Chanura. They shattered his limbs and he repeatedly fell unconscious. However, he got up with the speed of a hawk. He angrily struck the illustrious Vasudeva on the chest with both of his clenched hands. As a result of that blow, like an elephant that has been struck with a garland, he did not budge. Hari seized Chanura by his arms and whirled him around several times. He powerfully flung him down on the ground, so that his life began to ebb away. His garlands and garments were dishevelled, like Indra's pole when it was brought down. [309] In that way, Mushtika first struck Balabhadra with his own fist. However, he received a blow from the hand and suffered severely. He trembled and, suffering, vomited blood from his mouth. He lost his life and fell down on the ground, like a tree that has been struck by a storm. O king! Rama, supreme among strikers, then faced Kuta. He playfully toyed with him and negli-

gently killed him with a blow of his left fist. In that way, Krishna kicked at Shala's head with the front of his foot. He did the same with Toshalaka. The heads of both were shattered and they fell down on the ground. When Chanura, Mushtika, Kuta, Shala and Toshalaka were killed, all the remaining wrestlers wished to save their lives and fled.

'The two of them then dragged their gopa friends in [310] and they sported together. While the trumpets blared, the two of them danced, their anklets jingling. With the exception of Kamsa, all the people were delighted at Rama and Krishna's deed. With brahmanas at the forefront, they uttered words of praise. When the best among the wrestlers had been killed or had fled, the king of Bhoja stopped the playing of the musical instruments. He spoke these words. "Drive Vasudeva's wicked sons away from the city. Seize the wealth of the gopas and bind up the evil-minded Nanda. Instantly kill the evil-minded Vasudeva, the worst among wicked ones. Also kill my father, Ugrasena, and all those who are on the side of the enemy." When Kamsa boasted in this way, the undecaying one became angry. He jumped and easily leapt up on to that high gallery. [311] He [312] saw him enter there, like his own death. The spirited one immediately jumped up from his seat and seized a sword and a shield. With that sword in his hand he quickly moved around, to the left and to the right, like a hawk in the sky. However, his fierce strength was irresistible and he powerfully seized him, the way Tarkshya's son seizes a serpent. He seized him by the hair and his diadem was knocked down. From that high gallery, he flung him down on to the arena. The one with the lotus in his navel is the refuge of the universe and controls himself. He flung himself down on top of him. While the world looked on, he seized him by the hair and like a lion dragging an elephant, dragged him along the ground. O Indra among men! Great sounds of lamentation were uttered by all the people. He had always been anxious and his intelligence had been focused on the lord, when he was drinking, eating, moving, sleeping and breathing. He had always seen the one with a chakra as his weapon in front of him. Therefore, he obtained a form just like him, which is so very difficult to obtain.

‘He had eight younger brothers, Kanka, Nyagrodhaka and others. They wished to repay their brother’s death. Extremely enraged, they attacked. They rushed forward with great force. Rohini’s son controlled himself. He raised a club and killed them, the way the lord of deer kills animals. Kettle-drums were sounded in the firmament. Brahma, Isha and the others rejoiced and showered down flowers. The women [313] praised them and danced. O great king! His wives and those of his relatives [314] were miserable at their deaths. They approached, beating their heads and with tears in their eyes. The grieving wives embraced them, as they were lying down on a bed meant for heroes. The women lamented in loud tones and repeatedly shed tears. “Alas! O protector! O loved one! O one who knew about dharma! O compassionate and kind protector! With you slain, we, the house and the offspring have also been destroyed. O bull among men! Without you, the city has lost its lord. Like us, it is no longer radiant and the festivities and auspicious signs have ceased. You committed terrible violence against innocent creatures. That is what has reduced you to this state. How can a person who causes harm enjoy peace? He is the one behind the creation and destruction of all creatures. He is the protector too. How can a person who opposes him ever obtain happiness?” The illustrious one, the creator of all the worlds, comforted the royal women. He arranged that the funeral rites of those who had been killed should be performed. He freed his mother and father from their fetters. Krishna and Rama bowed down before them, touching their feet with their heads. Devaki and Vasudeva realized that those two were the lords of the universe and respectfully honoured them. They were scared and did not embrace their own sons.’

Chapter 10(45)

Shri-Shuka said, ‘Purushottama discerned that his parents had got to know about his true nature. Since this should not happen, he cast his maya, which confounds people, over them. With his elder brother, the bull among the Satvatas approached his parents. He humbly bowed down and affectionately

addressed them as “Father” and “Mother”, pleasing them. He said, “O father! The two of you have always been anxious about us. During infancy, boyhood and youth, we were never like sons to you. Suffering from destiny, we could not reside with you. Boys are nurtured in their father’s house and obtain great joy. The parents give birth and nourish. Even if a mortal person with a body tries through every possible means and lives for one hundred years, he cannot repay the debt that is owed to them. If a capable son does not pay this back himself, using his riches and means of subsistence, after he dies, he is made to eat his own flesh. If a capable person does not support his aged mother and father, his virtuous wife, his infant child, his preceptor, a brahmana or a person who seeks refuge, even if he breathes, he is as good as dead. We have been incapable because our minds have always been anxious about Kamsa. Since we have not been able to worship you, these days have been spent in futility. O father! O mother! You should pardon us. We were dependent on others. Since we suffered severely from the evil-hearted one, we have not been able to render you service.” Hari, the atman of the universe, used his maya to assume human form and said this. Bewildered by his words, they placed him on their laps and embraced him, immensely happy. Bound to him by bonds of affection, they sprinkled him with flows of tears. O king! Their throats choked with tears and confused, they could not say anything. Thus, Devaki’s illustrious son comforted his parents. He instated his maternal grandfather, Ugrasena, as the king of the Yadus. He said, “O great king! You should command us and the subjects. Because of the curse inflicted by Yayati, a Yadu should not be seated on a royal throne. [315] Since I am present before you as a servant, the gods, not to speak of kings among men, will humbly bring offerings to you.” He then brought back all his kin and relatives who had fled in different directions because of their fear of Kamsa—Yadus, Vrishnis, Andhakas, Madhus, Dasharhas, Kukuras and others. They had suffered from the exile in foreign lands and he respectfully comforted them. The creator of the universe made them dwell in their own houses and satisfied them with wealth. Protected by the arms of Krishna and Samkarshana, they obtained their desires and were successful, finding pleasure in their houses. Their anxieties were removed

by Krishna and Rama. Every day, they happily looked at Mukunda's lotus face. They always rejoiced because of his handsome, compassionate and smiling glances. Even the aged ones there became young and extremely energetic. Their eyes repeatedly drank in the nectar from Mukunda's lotus face.

'Devaki's illustrious son approached Nanda, along with Samkarshana. O Indra among kings! He embraced him and said, "O father! We have been affectionately nourished and loved by the two of you. Parents are more affectionate towards their sons than towards their own selves. Infant children are sometimes abandoned by their relatives because they are incapable of nurturing and protecting them. However, the real father and the real mother are those who nourish them like their own sons. O father! You should now go to Vraja. Because of affection, our relatives here have been miserable. After bestowing happiness on our well-wishers here, we will also go there." In this way, the illustrious Achyuta comforted Nanda and the others from Vraja. He respectfully honoured them with garments, ornaments, utensils and other things. Thus addressed, Nanda embraced him. He was overwhelmed with love. His eyes were full of tears. With the gopas, he left for Vraja.

'O king! After this, Shura's son followed the rites and used a priest and brahmanas to undertake the *dvija samskara* for his two sons. [316] As dakshina, he worshipped and gave them [317] cows ornamented with golden necklaces and their ornamented calves, all of them covered with silken garments. At the time of the birth of Krishna and Rama, the immensely intelligent one had mentally resolved to give some. [318] However, following adharma, Kamsa had seized these. He remembered that and gave those too. With the samskara completed, the two of them attained the status of being a dvija. They followed excellent vows. They also received the vow of *gayatra* from Garga, the priest of the lineage of the Yadus. [319] Those two lords of the universe were the source of all kinds of knowledge and knew everything. No one else could have imparted this unblemished knowledge to them. However, to ensure the welfare of men, they concealed this. Therefore, desiring to reside in their preceptor's house, they went to the one named

Sandipani, who was from Kashi, but resident of Avantipura. [320] Having obtained him as a preceptor, those two self-restrained ones served him unwaveringly and with devotion, setting a yardstick. They revered him like a god. The supreme among brahmanas was satisfied with their pure sentiments and humble behaviour. The preceptor spoke to them about all the Vedas, the Vedangas, the secrets of *dhanurveda*, the texts of dharma, the paths of *nyaya*, the knowledge of logic and the six methods of political science. [321] O king! Those two were supreme among the best of men. All kinds of knowledge originated with them. Therefore, they assimilated and mastered everything, when it was uttered only once. O king! They controlled themselves and in sixty-four days and nights, learnt sixty-four different arts. [322] Having satisfied their preceptor, they wished to pay the teacher's dakshina. O king! The brahmana realized their extraordinary greatness and their superhuman intelligence. He consulted his wife and asked for the boon that his son, who had died in the ocean in Prabhasa, might come back.

'The two *maharatha*s [323] agreed to this and mounted their chariot. Invincible in their valour, they reached Prabhasa. Having reached the shore, they sat down for a while. The ocean recognized them and respectfully brought them offerings. The illustrious one told him, "You used your giant wave to seize a child here. He is our preceptor's son. Quickly give him back to us." The ocean replied, "O lord! I did not take him away. It was the great daitya, Panchajana. O Krishna! That asura assumes the form of a conch shell and roams around inside the water. He is the one who has really seized him." Hearing this, the lord quickly entered the water and killed him. However, he did not see the child inside his stomach. Taking the conch shell that had been his body, he returned to the chariot and went to Yama's beloved city, known as Samyamani. Along with the one who wields the plough as a weapon, [324] Janardana went there and blew on the conch shell. Yama, the one who controls all subjects, heard the sound of the conch shell being blown. He worshipped them with a lot of offerings and great devotion. He humbly spoke to Krishna, who resides in the hearts of all creatures. "O Vishnu! In your pastimes, you have assumed human forms. What can I do for you?" The illustrious one said, "Because of the bondage of his own kar-

ma, our preceptor's son was brought here. O great king! Give prime importance to my command and bring him here." He agreed and brought the preceptor's son there. The two supreme ones of the Yadu lineage restored him and asked their preceptor to ask for another boon. "O child! [325] You have completely fulfilled everything that must be done for a preceptor. With disciples like you, what else can a preceptor desire? O brave ones! Return to your own home. May your deeds purify everything. May you remember the hymns of the Vedas in this world and in the next one." O child! Having taken the permission of the preceptor, they mounted the chariot, which was as swift as the wind. Thundering like a cloud, they returned to their own city. On seeing Rama and Janardana, all the people were delighted. They had not seen them for many days and were like people who had regained lost wealth.'

Chapter 10(46)

Shri-Shuka said, 'The foremost minister of the Vrishnis was Uddhava, Krishna's beloved friend. He was supremely intelligent and was directly Brihaspati's [326] disciple. On one occasion, the illustrious Hari, the refuge of all those who are afflicted, spoke to his beloved devotee in private. He held his hand in his own hand and said, "O Uddhava! O amiable one! Go to Vraja and bring pleasure to our parents. As a result of separation from me, the gopis are suffering. Convey my message and relieve them. Their minds and lives have been immersed in me. For my sake, they have given up everything connected with the body. For my sake, they have cast aside the dharma of the worlds. Therefore, I will nurture them. Though I am far away, for the women of Gokula, I am the most loved. O dear one! They remember me and are confounded. Because of the separation, they are anxious and distracted. Their minds are on me. It is because I sent them a message about my return that those cowherd women are managing, somehow or the other, with a great deal of difficulty, to remain alive." O king! Thus addressed,

Uddhava honoured the words of his master. He brought a chariot and mounted it, leaving for Nanda's Gokula.

'The prosperous one reached Nanda's Vraja just as the sun was about to set. His vehicle was covered with dust from the hooves of the animals that were returning. There was the sound of excited bulls fighting with each other to have intercourse with cows that were in heat. Cows with heavy udders rushed here and there, in search of their own calves. The white calves jumped around in different directions. There was the sound of cows being milked, mixed with the notes of flutes. The place was ornamented with shining gopas and gopis, singing about the auspicious deeds of Bala and Krishna. The residences of the gopas were beautiful with fires, the sun, guests, cattle, brahmanas, ancestors and gods being worshipped with incense, lamps and garlands. There were blossoming forests in every direction, resounding with the calls of flocks of birds. The lotus ponds were decorated with swans and *karandava*s. [327] As soon as Krishna's beloved companion arrived, Nanda happily embraced and worshipped him, taking him to be Vasudeva [328] himself. He ate excellent food and comfortably seated himself on a mat. His feet were massaged and other things were done to remove his exhaustion. He [329] then asked him, "O dear one! O extremely fortunate one! Is our friend, Shura's son, [330] well? Has he been freed and is he surrounded by his well-wishers? It is good fortune that the evil Kamsa has been killed, along with his followers, because of his own sins. He has always hated the virtuous Yadus, who are devoted to dharma. Does Krishna remember us, his mother, his well-wishers, his friends and the gopas? He is the protector of Vraja. Does he remember the cows, Vrindavana and the mountain? Will Govinda return at least once, to see his own people? It is only then that we will be able to see his face, with the excellent nose and the smiling glances. We were saved from the forest conflagration, the storm, the rain, the bull [331] and the snake, deadly dangers extremely difficult to cross, by the extremely great-souled Krishna. O dear one! When we remember Krishna's valour, his pastimes, sidelong glances, smiles and conversation, all our activities become slack. When we see the rivers, mountains, forests and regions that were adorned by his feet and where he played, our

minds become immersed in him. Just as Garga said, I think that Krishna and Rama are two supreme gods who have come to this world for some great purpose of the gods. As if playing, like a king of deer with animals, they killed Kamsa, who possessed the strength of ten thousand elephants, the two wrestlers and the king of elephants. Like a king of elephants with a staff, he shattered an extremely strong bow that was three *tala*s long. [332] With a single hand, he held the mountain up for seven days. As if he was playing, he killed Pralamba, Dhenuka, Arishta, Trinavarta, Baka and other daityas who had defeated the gods and the asuras." Thus, with his mind devoted to Krishna, Nanda repeatedly remembered this. Extremely anxious and overwhelmed by the force of his love, he then fell silent. Yashoda heard the description of her son's conduct. As she heard, tears flowed and the affection made milk flow from her breasts.

'Uddhava was delighted to see the great devotion Nanda and Yashoda had towards the illustrious Krishna. Uddhava said, "O revered one! The two of you are certainly the most praiseworthy among all those who have bodies in this world. You possess this kind of attachment towards Narayana, the preceptor who created everything. These two, Rama and Mukunda, are Purusha and Pradhana. They were the seed and the womb of the universe. They are the two ancient ones, the lords of knowledge, whose signs can be detected inside all creatures. At the time of death, if a person fixes his mind on him even for an instant, his impurities and store of karma are swiftly destroyed. He obtains the complexion of the sun and full of the brahman, achieves the supreme objective. Narayana is the cause behind everything. He has assumed this mortal form for a specific purpose. You possess greatest devotion towards the great-souled one. How can there be any other good deeds left for the two of you to accomplish? Within a short period of time, Achyuta, the illustrious lord of the Satvatas, will return to Vraja to bring pleasure to his parents. Krishna told you that he would return after killing Kamsa, the enemy of all the Satvatas, in the arena and he will certainly fulfil that pledge. O immensely fortunate ones! Do not be distressed. You will see Krishna in your presence. Just as fire is hidden inside kindling, he exists in the hearts of all creatures. He is beyond attachment. There is no one

whom he loves and there is no one whom he hates. He is impartial towards everyone and no one is his superior, inferior or equal. He has no mother or father, no wife, sons, or other relatives. There is no one who is his own. There is no one who is not his own. He has no body and no birth. He has no karma. For his pastimes and to protect the virtuous, he assumes birth in this world as superior, inferior and mixed species. [333] Though he is devoid of gunas, he assumes the sattva, rajas and tamas gunas. As part of his pastimes, he uses these gunas to create, preserve and destroy. If one is being whirled around, to the eye it seems as if the ground is revolving. In that way, it is said that because of ahamkara, one takes oneself to be the agent, though the real agent is consciousness. [334] Indeed, the illustrious Hari is not only your son. He is the lord and is the son, atman, father and mother of everyone. Nothing that has been seen, nothing that has been heard, nothing that has happened, nothing that is happening, nothing that will happen, the mobile and the immobile, the large and the small—do not exist without Achyuta. He cannot be described in words. He is the paramatman, manifested in everything.'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'O king! Nanda and Krishna's companion conversed in this way and the night passed. The gopis awoke and lit the lamps. They worshipped the household deities and started to churn the milk. As they pulled on the ropes, the light of the lamps reflected on their shining jewels and the rows of bangles on their hands. Their hips, breasts, necklaces and earrings moved. Their cheeks glowed and their faces were red with kunkuma. The women of Vraja loudly sang about the lotus-eyed one and the sound rose up and touched the sky. This mixed with the sound of the churning, and everything inauspicious in the various directions was dispelled. When the illustrious sun rose, the residents of Vraja noticed the chariot made out of molten gold in front of Nanda's gate. They asked, "Whom does this belong to? Has Akrura, the one who accomplished Kamsa's task of taking away the lotus-eyed Krishna to Madhu's city, arrived? What will he accomplish for his master now? Will he perform funeral rites for us?" While the women were speaking in this way, having finished his morning ablutions, Uddhava arrived there.'

Chapter 10(47)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Krishna's companion possessed long arms and his eyes were like freshly bloomed lotuses. He was attired in yellow garments and adorned with a garland of lotuses. As a result of sparkling earrings, his lotus face was radiant. On seeing him, the women of Vraja were exceedingly surprised. "Who is this, so handsome to behold? Where has he come from? Why are his garments and ornaments like those of Achyuta?" Saying this, all of them, who had sought refuge at Uttamashloka's feet, surrounded him. They humbly bowed down to him and honoured him well, with bashful and smiling glances and delightful words. They understood that he was carrying a message from Rama's lord. Therefore, once he was seated, they asked him in private. "We know that you are an attendant of the Lord of Yadu. You have come here because you have been so instructed by your master, who wishes to bring pleasure to his parents. Otherwise, there is nothing in this Vraja of cattle that is worth remembering. Even for a sage, the bonds of affection towards a relative are extremely difficult to cast aside. The friendship towards others is mockery, because it is driven by a specific purpose and lasts until the objective has been accomplished. It is like the conduct of men towards women, or that of bees towards flowers. Courtesans abandon a person who possesses nothing and subjects an incompetent king. Once they have obtained the knowledge and paid the dakshina, officiating priests abandon their preceptor. When the fruit has been eaten, birds abandon a tree. Once he has eaten, a guest abandons a household. Animals abandon a forest that has been burnt down. After enjoyment, a lover abandons a devoted woman." The words, bodies and minds of the gopis were immersed in Govinda. When Uddhava, Krishna's messenger, arrived, they forgot about worldly norms and met him. They sang about their beloved one's deeds. Forgetting all shame, they wept. They repeatedly remembered his infancy and childhood.

'A gopi thought about her union with Krishna. She saw a bee and thought that it was a messenger sent by her beloved. She addressed it in the follow-

ing words. The gopis [335] said, "O bee! You are the friend of someone who is deceitful. Do not touch our feet with your beard. [336] It is stained with kunkuma from his garland, when it pressed against the breasts of our rival. [337] Let the lord of Madhu show his favours to those proud women. Why has he sent a messenger like you? In an assembly of the Yadus, this will be looked upon as deceit. He confounded us by making us drink the nectar of his lips only once. After that, he immediately abandoned us, like you abandon a flower. How does Padma [338] serve his lotus feet? Indeed, she must also have lost her mind because of Uttamashloka's conversation. O one with six legs! We are without homes. Why are you singing so much about the lord of the Yadus in front of us? This is old stuff for us. Sing about these topics before the female friends of Vijaya's friend. [339] He is relieving the wounds in their breasts now. They will give you whatever you wish for. No woman in heaven, earth or *rasatala* [340] is unavailable to him. He is deceitful, with a beautiful smile. His eyebrows are arched. The goddess of prosperity worships the dust of his feet. Who are we? However, wretched people like us have the words about Uttamashloka on their side. Remove your head from my feet. I know you as Mukunda's messenger. Therefore, you are learned in entreating and flattery. We gave up our husbands, children and everything else in this world. However, his mind is ungrateful and he has himself given us up. What reconciliation is possible with him? Like a hunter, he followed the dharma of a hunter and pierced the Indra among the apes. [341] He was vanquished by a woman and disfigured a woman who desired him. [342] Like a crow, he ate Bali's offerings and thereafter, bound him up. Therefore, even though we can't give up hearing about him, enough of friendship with that dark one. Hearing about his pastimes and deeds only once is like nectar to the ears. It cleanses and destroys the proclivities of the opposite pair of sentiments. The listeners immediately give up their homes and miserable families. Behaving like many wretched birds, they follow the practice of begging for a living. We trusted him and took his deceitful words to be true. We are like does, the wives of a black antelope, ignorant about the songs sung by a hunter. On many occasions, we have seen and felt the fierce pain of desire, caused by his nails. O messenger! Please speak

about something else. O friend of my beloved! Why have you returned? Has he sent you again? O dear one! O respected one! Please ask what you wish for. O amiable one! Union with him is extremely difficult to give up. But how will you take us to his side? Shri, his consort, is always with him, right on his chest. Unfortunately, the son of the noble one [343] is now in Madhu's city. O amiable one! Does he remember his father's house and his friends, the gopas? Does he ever talk about us, his female servants? When will he rest his hands, fragrant with the scent of aloe, on our heads?" The gopis were anxious to see Krishna. Hearing them, Uddhava comforted them and told them about the message sent by their beloved.

'Uddhava said, "It is certain that you have accomplished your objectives and are worshipped by the worlds. You have dedicated your minds to the illustrious Vasudeva. Devotion towards Krishna is brought about through donations, vows, austerities, oblations, chanting, studying, self-control and many other kinds of superior modes. However, your devotion towards Uttamashloka is supreme. It is through good fortune that you have obtained this devotion, which is extremely difficult for even sages to get. It is through good fortune that you gave up your sons, husbands, bodies, own relatives and houses and sought out the supreme Purusha who is known as Krishna. O immensely fortunate ones! With all your souls, you have obtained this devotion to Adhokshaja as a right, even at a time of separation. You have shown me a favour by displaying it to me. Now listen to the message sent by your beloved. It will bring you pleasure. O fortunate ones! I have come here with my master's private message. The illustrious one said, 'Since I am in all atmans, you can never be separated from me. Just as the elements, space, air, fire, water and the earth exist in all beings, I am present in the mind, the breath of life, the senses and the store of gunas in all beings. Through the maya of my own powers, the elements, the senses and the gunas, I use my own self to create, preserve and destroy within my own self. The atman is full of pure jnana and is distinct from the aggregation of the gunas. It can be perceived in the states of wakefulness, dreaming and deep sleep, [344] created by maya. The objects of the senses are like what one sees in a dream. Even when one is not asleep, one thinks about them and runs

after them in vain. Therefore, one should restrain the senses. The learned say that this is the objective of the traditional texts, yoga, samkhya, renunciation, austerities, self-control and truth—like rivers heading towards the ocean. I, your beloved, am now far distant from your sight. This is with the objective of attracting your minds towards me, while you desire me and meditate on me. The minds of women are such that when a beloved person is nearby, in front of their eyes, they are not as attracted to him as they are when he is far away. Since your minds are completely immersed in me and you have freed yourself from all other pursuits, since you always remember me, within a short while, you will obtain me. O fortunate ones! There were some who had to remain in Vraja. Consequently, they could not enjoy the rasa pastimes with me in the forest in the night. Nevertheless, because they thought about my valour, they will obtain me.'"'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'Thus, the women of Vraja heard the instructions of their beloved. The message revived their memories. Rejoicing, they addressed Uddhava in these words.

'The gopis said, "It is good fortune that Kamsa, who caused injury to the Yadus, has been killed, along with his followers. It is good fortune that Achyuta has accomplished all his objectives and is now happily residing with his relatives. O amiable one! He brought us pleasure and we worshipped him with gentle and bashful smiles. Is Gada's elder brother doing that to the women of the city now and are they casting their generous glances on him? He is accomplished in bringing pleasure and he is loved by the women of the city. Worshipped by their words and bewildering behaviour, how can he not be bound down by them? O virtuous one! In the course of conversations, does Govinda remember us? In the midst of an assembly of urban women, is he free to mention those from the village? Does he remember the nights with his beloved ones in Vrindavana, enchanting with night lotuses, jasmine and the moon? In the midst of the rasa assembly, anklets jingling on the feet, he enjoyed himself with us. There was a time when we glorified his charming accounts. Will Dasharha ever come here? Because of what he has himself done, we are tormented and grieving. Will his limbs bring us back to life, just as Indra's showers do to the forest? But

why will Krishna come here? He has won the kingdom and killed those who caused him injury. He has married the daughters of the kings. Surrounded by all his well-wishers, he is happy. The great-souled one is Shri's lord. He is complete in himself and has accomplished all his desires. What purpose of his can be accomplished by us, who reside in the forest, or by the others? There is supreme bliss when there is no desire left. The *svairini* Pingala said that. [345] Though we know this, it is impossible to give up the hope of seeing Krishna. Who will be interested in giving up conversations with Uttamashloka? Though he does not desire her, rarely does Shri move away from his body. O lord! With Samkarshana, Krishna roamed around here, in these rivers, the mountain, the forest regions, amidst the cows and the sounds of the flute. Indeed, they repeatedly remind us about Nanda gopa's son. The place is marked with his footprints, Shri's refuge. We are incapable of forgetting him. His gait, his charming and generous smiles, his pastimes, his glances and his sweet words have stolen our hearts. How can we forget him? O lord! O Rama's lord! O lord of Vraja! O destroyer of suffering! O Govinda! Gokula is submerged in an ocean of grief. Please raise us up."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'They were suffering from fever because of the separation, and Krishna's message relieved them. They realized that Uddhava was no different from Adhokshaja and honoured him. [346] He resided there for some months, dispelling the grief of the gopis. Singing about accounts of Krishna's pastimes, he delighted Gokula. For the residents of Vraja, the days that Uddhava lived in Vraja, speaking about Krishna, seemed to pass like an instant. [347] Hari's servant found pleasure in looking at the rivers, forest, mountain, valleys and flowering trees and reminded the residents of Vraja about Krishna. He saw that the gopis were disturbed because of their complete absorption in Krishna. Uddhava was greatly delighted. He bowed down to them and said, "Among all those who possess bodies on earth, the gopa women are supreme. They have perfected their sentiments towards Govinda, who is in all atmans. This is a state desired by sages, and us, who are scared of samsara. If one does not savour the account of the infinite one, what is the point of being born as a brahmana? [348] These women

roam around in the forest and are contaminated by their improper conduct. [349] But they have perfected their sentiments towards Krishna, the paramatman. The lord himself certainly confers benefit on those who worship him, even if they are ignorant, just as the king of medicines does, [350] even when it is unwillingly imbibed. In the festival of rasa, the necks of the women of Vraja were embraced by his arms and they obtained this great benediction. Though Shri is on his chest and is constantly associated with him, she does not obtain this favour. Nor do celestial women, whose fragrance and beauty are like those of lotuses. What need be said about others? I desire to be the shrubs, creepers and herbs of Vrindavana, since they have been touched by the dust of their feet. [351] They gave up the noble path and their own relatives, which are so very difficult to cast aside. They worshipped Mukunda's footprints, which the sacred texts seek to search out. The illustrious Krishna's lotus feet are worshipped by Shri, Aja [352] and the lords of yoga, who have accomplished all their desires. In the assembly of rasa, he placed them on their breasts. They embraced these and all their torments were dispelled. I repeatedly bow down to the dust on the feet of the women of Nanda's Vraja. When they sing about Hari's account, they purify the three worlds." After this, Dasharha [353] took his leave of the gopis, Yashoda, Nanda and the gopas. Ready to leave, he mounted his chariot. As he emerged, Nanda and the others affectionately approached him, with many kinds of gifts in their hands. With tears in their eyes, they said, "May our minds and our deeds seek refuge at Krishna's lotus feet. May our words utter his names. May our bodies be engaged in bowing down to him. Wherever we are whirled around in our karma, through the wishes of the lord, through our auspicious conduct and gifts, may we be attached to the lord, Krishna." O lord of men! Uddhava was thus honoured by the gopas, who were driven by their devotion towards Krishna. He again returned to Mathura, protected by Krishna. He bowed down before Krishna and told him about the great devotion of the residents of Vraja. He gave Vasudeva, Rama and the king the gifts.' [354]

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Shri-Shuka said, 'The illustrious one could see everything and was in all atmans. He knew that the *sairindhri* [355] was tormented by desire. Desiring to bring her pleasure, he went to her house. It was filled with extremely expensive furnishings. Everything that could be used to satisfy desire was there. There were strings of pearls, flags, canopies, beds and seats. It was decorated with fragrant incense, lamps, garlands and perfumes. Seeing that he was arriving, she was filled with respect and immediately stood up from her seat. With her friends, she came forward to meet Achyuta and respectfully offered him an excellent seat and other objects. As a virtuous person, Uddhava was also honoured. But having touched the seat offered, he sat down on the ground. Krishna followed the conduct observed by people and quickly entered the chamber with an extremely expensive bed. She bathed and anointed herself, attiring herself in garments and ornaments. She prepared garlands, perfumes, betel leaves and fragrant asava and approached Madhava. She glanced at him, with bashful and playful smiles. He summoned the beautiful one, who was bashful and scared because this was a new encounter. He held her by her ornamented hands and made her sit on the bed. Her only good act had been that of offering him unguents. However, he enjoyed himself with the beautiful one. Ananga had led to her breasts, chest and eyes being inflamed. But as soon as she inhaled Ananta's feet, those wounds were healed. With both arms, she embraced her beloved one against her breasts. He was the embodiment of bliss and she gave away the torment she had suffered from for a long time. Having offered him unguents, she had obtained the lord of kaivalya, the lord who is so difficult to obtain. The unfortunate one entreated him in these words. "O beloved one! Please spend a few days with me. O lotus-eyed one! Enjoy yourself with me. I cannot bear to give up your companionship." The one who shows honours honoured her and granted her the boon of satisfying desire. With Uddhava, the lord of everything then returned to his own prosperous residence. Vishnu, the lord of all the lords, is extremely difficult to please. Having worshipped him, only an ignorant person will ask for a boon that will please the mind, but is unreal. [356]

‘With Uddhava and Rama, the lord Krishna then went to Akrura’s house. He desired to bring pleasure to Akrura and also wished to get a task accomplished. From a distance, he saw those best among men, his relatives, approaching. Delighted, he stood up and embraced and honoured them. He bowed down to Krishna and Rama and was honoured by them. Following the recommended rites, when they had seated themselves, he worshipped them. O king! He bathed their feet and sprinkled that water on his head. He gave them expensive garments, divine fragrances, garlands and excellent ornaments. He lowered his head down and worshipped them, taking their feet on his lap and massaging them. Bent down in humility, Akrura spoke to Krishna and Rama. “It is good fortune that you have killed the wicked Kamsa and his followers. You have saved the lineage from endless suffering and have ensured prosperity. The two of you are Pradhana and Purusha. You are the cause behind the universe and you pervade the universe. Without you, neither cause, nor effect, exists. Using your own powers, you have created this universe and have entered it. O brahman! Through hearing [357] and direct sight, you are perceived in many kinds of ways. The elements, earth and the others, manifest themselves as different species, mobile and immobile objects. In that way, you alone are the source of everything. You are the atman who controls himself and is manifest in diverse forms. Through your own powers and the gunas of sattva, rajas and tamas, you create, preserve and destroy the universe. But you are not bound down by gunas and karma. Your atman consists of jnana. What can cause you bondage? The body and other such restrictions are not noticed for you. The atman has no birth or differentiation. Therefore, there is no bondage or liberation for you. Perhaps we see you in that way because of our lack of discrimination, or because you desire that it should be like that. For the sake of the welfare of the universe, you expounded the ancient path of the Vedas. Whenever that path is restricted by evil heretics, you manifest yourself in your attribute of sattva. You are that lord and you have now descended in Vasudeva’s house in your portion, so as to remove the burden of the earth. You have hence slaughtered one hundred akshouhinis of kings who were the portions of others, and not of the gods. You have done this to extend the

fame of the lineage. Today, our homes have indeed been filled with fortune. You are the embodied form of all the gods, ancestors, creatures and kings. The water that washes your feet purifies the three worlds. O Adhokshaja! You are the preceptor of the universe and you have entered our home today. You are affectionate towards your devotees and your words are always true. You are a well-wisher. You are grateful. Which learned person will go to anyone else for refuge? As a well-wisher, you give those who worship you everything that they want, even your own self, which never diminishes, or increases. O Janardana! It is good fortune that you are now manifest before us. This is an objective that the lords of yoga and lords among the gods find very difficult to obtain. Quickly sever the cords of affection towards sons, wives, wealth, homes, bodies and everything else. All this is the result of your maya." The illustrious Hari was thus worshipped and praised by his devotee. He smiled and enchanted Akrura with his words. The illustrious one said, "You are our preceptor, paternal uncle and a relative who is always praised. We are like your sons, whom you protect and nurture with compassion. Immensely fortunate ones like you are supreme among those who should be worshipped and served. The gods always hanker after what brings them benefit, but virtuous ones are not driven by selfish motives. Unlike the sight of virtuous ones, tirthas with water and gods made out of earth purify after a long period of time. [358] You are our well-wisher. For our benefit and desiring to do benefit to the Pandavas, go to Gajasahvya [359] and ask how they are. When their father passed away, along with their mother, those children were extremely miserable. We have heard that the king [360] brought them to his own city and made them live there. The king, Ambika's son, is inferior in intelligence and is blind. He is under the control of his wicked son and it is certain that he does not treat his brother's sons impartially. Go and ascertain his present conduct, whether it is virtuous or wicked. When we have found out, we will act so as to bring welfare to our well-wishers." The illustrious lord Hari told Akrura this. With Samkarshana and Uddhava, he then left for his own residence.'

Chapter 10(49)

Shri-Shuka said, 'He went to Hastinapura, ornamented by the fame of Indras among the Pourava lineage. He saw Ambika's son, along with Bhishma, Vidura, Pritha, Bahlika and his son, [361] Bharadvaja's descendant, [362] Goutama's descendant, [363] Karna, Suyodhana, [364] Drona's son, [365] the Pandavas and other well-wishers. Gandini's son [366] met all the relatives in the proper way. He asked the well-wishers about their welfare and in turn, they asked him whether he himself was well. Desiring to find out about the king's conduct, he lived with them for some months. He had wicked sons. His own mind was feeble and he followed the wishes of deceitful ones. [367] The Parthas were powerful, energetic, strong, humble and possessed excellent qualities. They were loved by the subjects and Dhritarashtra's sons could not tolerate this. They gave them poison and committed other unworthy acts. Pritha and Vidura told him everything about all this. Pritha approached her brother Akrura, who had come. [368] She remembered the place where she had been born and spoke to him with tears in her eyes. "O amiable one! Do my parents and brothers remember me? What about my sisters, brother's sons, the women and friends? My brother's son, the illustrious Krishna, is the refuge of all those who are devoted to him. Does he remember his father's sister? What about Rama, whose eyes are like lotus petals? I am grieving amidst my enemies, like a doe in the midst of wolves. Will he comfort me and the fatherless sons with his words? O Krishna! O great yogi! O Krishna! O atman of the universe! O creator of the universe! O Govinda! I am seeking refuge with you. Save me. I, and my children, are suffering. Men are scared of death and samsara and you are the lord who confers emancipation. With the exception of your lotus feet, I do not see any other refuge. I bow down to the pure Krishna, the brahman and the paramatman. O lord of yoga! O embodiment of yoga! I seek refuge with you." In this way, she remembered her own relatives and Krishna, the lord of the universe. O king! Your great grandmother wept in grief. Akrura was indifferent towards joy and misery. He, and the immensely illustrious Vidura, comforted Kunti and told her the reason behind the birth of her sons.

‘The king behaved partially because of affection towards his sons. Before leaving, he [369] approached him when he was in the midst of his well-wishers and told him what his relatives and well-wishers [370] had said. Akrura said, “O son of Vichitravirya! O extender of the fame of the Kuru lineage! After your brother, Pandu, died, you have ascended to the throne. Follow dharma and protect the earth. Delight the subjects with your good conduct. If you act impartially, you will ensure your own benefit and obtain fame. However, if you act in a contrary way, you will be condemned in this world and head towards darkness. Therefore, let your conduct towards the Pandavas and your own sons be impartial. O king! In this world, one can never live permanently with anyone else. That is true of one’s own body, not to speak of wives, sons and others. Every creature is born alone and dies alone. The fruits of good deeds and wicked deeds are enjoyed alone. If a person with limited intelligence acquires wealth through adharma, this is taken away by others, who go by the false name of those who should be nurtured. [371] This is like water being taken away from an aquatic creature. An ignorant person uses adharma to nurture his breath of life, wealth, sons and other things, taking these to be his own. But all of these abandon him and he is unsuccessful. He does not know what is good for him. Forsaken by them, he has to himself bear his sins. Withdrawing from his own dharma, his objectives remain unfulfilled and he enters blinding darkness. O king! Therefore, look upon this world as a dream, maya or unreal wishes. O lord! Use your atman to control yourself and be impartial and serene.” Dhritarashtra replied, “O Danapati! [372] The words that you have spoken are beneficial and I am not satisfied with them. I am like a mortal person who has obtained amrita. O amiable one! However, these well-spoken words will not remain fixed in my heart, but are as fickle as lightning in a cloud. I am partial because of affection towards my sons. Who can shake off what the lord has determined? Which man can act in a contrary way? To remove the burden of the earth, he has now descended in the lineage of the Yadus. It is impossible to decipher his path. Using his own maya, he creates the gunas, distributes them and enters them. I bow down before the one who cannot be fathomed. Through his pastimes, he controls this wheel of samsara. He is the supreme

lord and destination." The Yadava thus ascertained the king's intentions. Taking the permission of the well-wishers, he returned again to the city of the Yadus. O Kouravya! He told Rama and Krishna about Dhritarashtra's behaviour towards the Pandavas. That is the reason why he had been sent.'

Chapter 10(50)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O bull among the Bharata lineage! Kamsa's two queens were Asti and Prapti. When their husband was dead, they were afflicted by grief and went to their father's house. Miserable, they told their father, Jarasandha, the king of Magadha, everything about themselves and about how they had become widows. O king! Hearing this unpleasant news, he was filled with sorrow and intolerance. He made a supreme effort to ensure that no Yadavas would be left on earth. He surrounded himself with twenty-three akshouhinis and from every direction, laid siege to Mathura, the capital of the Yadus. Krishna saw that army, which was like an ocean crossing the limits of the shoreline. It had laid siege to his own city and his own relatives were afflicted by fear. Though the illustrious Hari was the cause behind everything, for a specific purpose, he had assumed the form of a human avatara. Therefore, he thought about what would be appropriate to the time and the place. "To remove the earth's burden, I will destroy the army that has gathered. It has been brought together by the king of Magadha and all the kings are following his command. There are many akshouhinis, consisting of foot soldiers, horses, chariots and elephants. However, since he will make efforts to raise another army again, the king of Magadha should not be killed. [373] This is the reason I assumed this avatara, to remove the earth's burden, to protect the virtuous and to destroy the others. For the protection of dharma and to bring an end to adharma, when it becomes powerful on some occasions, I assume other bodies." While Govinda was thinking in this way, two chariots instantly descended from the sky. They were as radiant as the sun and possessed charioteers and the requisite equipment. On their own, ancient celestial weapons appeared. Seeing these, Hrishikesha

spoke to Samkarshana. “O lord! Behold the catastrophe that your own Yadus face. This chariot has arrived, with your beloved weapons. O lord! This is the reason the two of us have taken birth, to ensure benefit to the virtuous. Act so as to remove the earth’s burden, in the form of these twenty-three armies.” Having consulted in this way, the two Dasharhas armoured themselves. With their own resplendent weapons, they emerged from the city on their two chariots. They were only surrounded by a small army.

‘With Daruka as his charioteer, Hari emerged and blew on his conch shell and this made the hearts of the enemy soldiers tremble. Magadha [374] looked at them and said, “O Krishna! O worst among men! I do not wish to fight with you. You are a child and are alone. That would be a shame. You are evil and the slayer of relatives. You have hidden yourself. [375] O Rama! If you have faith and perseverance, muster those and fight. Either kill me, or give up your body, when it is shattered with my arrows, and go to heaven.” The illustrious one replied, “Those who are really brave do not boast. Instead, they exhibit their manliness. O king! We do not accept the words of those who are afflicted [376] and are about to die.” Jara’s son [377] advanced towards the two Madhavas. He surrounded them with an immensely large and powerful army, with soldiers, vehicles, standards, horses and chariots, just as the sun is covered with clouds, or a fire is covered with dust particles raised by the wind. The women of the city were positioned on the tops of houses, mansions and turrets. They could no longer see the chariots of Hari and Rama in the battle, with standards of Garuda and the palm tree. [378] They were afflicted by grief and lost their senses. The army of the enemy was like a mass of clouds that repeatedly showered down sharp arrows, like terrible showers of rain. Hari saw that his own soldiers were suffering as a result of this. He twanged the excellent Sharnga bow, worshipped by gods and asuras. He picked up arrows from his quiver and affixed them. He drew his bow back and released volleys of sharp arrows. Whirling the bow like a circle of fire, he incessantly slew elephants, horses and foot soldiers. With their temples shattered, elephants fell down. Their necks severed by arrows, many horses simultaneously fell down. Chariots were shattered, their horses, standards, charioteers and warriors destroyed. The arms, thighs and necks of

foot soldiers were severed. The limbs of bipeds, elephants and horses were mangled and hundreds of streams of blood started to flow. The arms were like snakes. [379] The heads of the men were like tortoises. The slain elephants were like islands. The horses were like crocodiles. The hands and thighs were like fish. The hair of the men was like moss. The bows were like waves and the waves were like tangles of weeds. The wheels [380] were like terrible whirlpools. The extremely expensive and excellent ornaments were like stones and gravel. In the battle, these flows caused terror to cowards and caused delight to those who were spirited. Samkarshana, infinite in his energy, used his club to slay the indomitable enemies. O dear one! That army was protected by the Indra among the Magadhas. It was impossible to penetrate and terrible. It was like an ocean where the distant shore is impossible to reach. However, Vasudeva's two sons conveyed it to its destruction. Those two supreme lords of the universe toyed with it. He is infinite in his qualities. Through his own pastimes, he brings about the creation, preservation and destruction of the three worlds. Therefore, it was not extraordinary that he should subjugate the enemy's army. However, when he follows the behaviour of a mortal, this is fit to be described.

'The immensely strong Jarasandha was without his chariot and Rama seized him, just as a lion forcibly seizes another lion. His army had been destroyed and he was the only one who was alive. He had killed his enemies in the past and was now bound up with human bonds and those of Varuna. However, Govinda still had a task that he desired to use him for. Therefore, he restrained him. [381] He was freed by the two protectors of the worlds. Revered by brave ones, he was now ashamed. He resolved to perform austerities. But along the way, he was restrained by kings. They used words that achieve purposes of purification, as well as ordinary norms of good policy. [382] "Your defeat at the hands of the Yadus is because of the bondage of your own karma." With all his armies destroyed, the king who was Brihadratha's son returned to Magadha. Having been slighted by the illustrious one, his mind was distressed. Mukunda had crossed the ocean that was the enemy's army with his own forces unharmed. The residents of heaven approved of what he had done and showered down flowers. Delight-

ed and freed from their anxiety, the residents of Mathura approached him. *Suta*s, *magadha*s [383] and bandis sang about his victory. As the two lords entered the city, there was the sound from many conch shells, kettledrums, other drums, tambourines, veenas and flutes. The women gazed fondly at him, their eyes widened with love. They showered garlands, curds, unbroken grain and tender shoots. The lord gathered the large number of riches left on the battlefield by the warriors and the ornaments of the warriors and presented these to the king of the Yadus.

'In this way, the king of the Magadhas and his army of askhouhinis fought against the Yadus seventeen times and was defeated, since they were protected by Krishna. Because of Krishna's energy, the Vrishnis destroyed all those armies. Though his own soldiers were destroyed, the enemy allowed the king to escape. The eighteenth encounter was about to commence. At that time, sent by Narada, the brave Yavana appeared. [384] He arrived and laid siege to Mathura with three crores of mlechchhas. In the world of men, he had heard that the Vrishnis were respected warriors who could fight against him. On seeing him, with Samkarshana as his aide, Krishna started to think. "From two sides, a great difficulty now presents itself before the Yadus. The Yavana has already arrived and has laid siege, with his large army. Either tomorrow, or the day after tomorrow, Magadha will also come here. While we are fighting against him, Jara's powerful son may arrive here and kill our relatives, or capture them and take them to his own city. Hence, we must now construct a fort that bipeds will find impossible to penetrate. When we have settled our relatives there, we will kill Yavana." Having consulted in this way, the illustrious one had a wonderful city constructed.

'Its entire circumference was twelve yojanas and it was inside the ocean. Tvashta's [385] accomplished knowledge of artisanship could be seen there. The roads, quadrangles and avenues were designed in conformity with principles of *vastu*. [386] There were divine trees and creepers in the gardens and there were wonderful groves. The golden summits reached up and touched the sky. The mansions and turrets were made out of crystal. There were treasure houses and stores made out of silver and brass, ornamented with

golden pots. The golden houses had jewels on top. The floors were paved with extremely expensive emeralds. The upper floors of the houses had shrines meant for the gods. It was full of people from the four varnas and there were beautiful houses for the lords of the Yadus. The great Indra gave Hari Sudharma and Parijata. [387] Despite being a mortal, if one dwelt here, one was no longer subject to the dharma of mortals. [388] Varuna gave horses that possessed the speed of thought. These were white, but each possessed one black ear. The lord of riches gave his store of eight treasures. [389] The guardians of the worlds presented their own riches. O king! When he descended on earth, the illustrious one had conferred various kinds of sovereignty and powers on them. They returned all these to Hari. Through his powers of yoga, Hari conveyed all the people there. Krishna advised Rama about protecting the subjects. Wearing a garland of lotuses and without any weapons, he then emerged through the city's gate.'

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Shri-Shuka said, 'He [390] saw him emerge, like the rising moon. He was beautiful to behold, dark in complexion and attired in yellow silk garments. The shrivatsa mark was on his chest and his neck was decorated with the radiant Koustubha. His arms were long and mighty and his eyes were red, like a freshly bloomed lotus. He was always cheerful. His excellent cheeks were beautiful and his smile was pure. His lotus face shone, due to the sparkling earrings in the form of *makara*s. [391] "This being is indeed Vasudeva. He has the shrivatsa mark. He is four-armed and lotus-eyed. With a garland of wild flowers, he is exceedingly handsome. He displays the signs mentioned by Narada. It cannot be anyone else. However, he is without weapons and is walking on foot. Therefore, I will also not use weapons to fight with him." Yavana decided this and ran after him, when he [392] was running away, with his back towards him. He wished to seize the one whom even yogis find it extremely difficult to obtain. At every step, Hari seemed to be within the reach of his hands. He continued to show himself and led

the lord of the Yavanas to a mountain cave that was far away. "You have been born in the lineage of the Yadus. It is not proper for you to flee." Since his inauspicious deeds had not yet been exhausted, he abused him in this way and followed him. Abused in this way, the illustrious one entered a cave in a mountain. [393] He [394] also entered and saw another man lying down there. "After having brought me to this distant place, he is now lying down, like a virtuous person." Taking him to be Achyuta, the foolish person struck out with his foot. He had been sleeping for a long period of time and slowly opened his eyes. He looked around in all the directions and saw him standing by his side. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! He glanced at him angrily. A fire was generated from his body and instantly reduced him to ashes.'

The king asked, 'O brahmana! What was the name of this man, the one who destroyed Yavana? Which lineage did he belong to? What was his valour? Why did he enter a cave and sleep there?'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'This great one was born in the lineage of the Ikshvakus and was Mandhata's son. He was known by the name of Muchukunda. He was devoted to brahmanas and to the truth. The large number of gods, led by Indra, were scared of the asuras and requested him to protect them. He protected them for a long period of time. When they obtained Guha [395] as their protector, they told Muchukunda, "O king! We have been protected by you. But you can now give up this hardship. [396] O brave one! You gave up your kingdom in the world of men, which was free of thorns. You gave up all your wishes and protected us. Your contemporary sons, queens, relatives, advisers, ministers and subjects no longer exist. They have faced the onset of time. The illustrious and undecaying lord, in the form of time, is more powerful than the powerful. Like a herder of animals with animals, time toys with subjects. O fortunate one! Ask for a boon from us, anything but kaivalya. The undecaying and illustrious lord, Vishnu, is alone capable of bestowing that." Thus addressed, the immensely illustrious one honoured the gods. Granted by the gods, he entered the cave and lay down there to sleep. [397] When Yavana was reduced to ashes, the illustrious bull among the Satvatas showed himself to the intelligent Muchukunda. He

saw him, as dark as a cloud, attired in yellow silk garments. The shrivatsa mark was on his chest and he dazzled because of the radiant Koustubha. He was four-armed and beautiful, with the vaijayanti garland. His handsome face was pleasant and the earrings, shaped like makaras, were radiant. To the world of men, his affectionate and smiling glances were worth looking at. He was handsome and young. His proud gait was like that of a crazy king of deer. Though he was immensely intelligent, the king was overwhelmed by his indomitable energy. Scared, he asked gently.

'Muchukunda asked, "You have come to this desolate cave in the mountain. Who are you? This place is full of thorns, but you are wandering around on feet that are as tender as the petals of lotuses. Are you the energy that exists in all energetic beings? Are you the illustrious fire god? Are you Surya, Soma, the great Indra, or a guardian of the world? Or are you someone else? Among the three gods among the gods, [398] I think that you are the bull among beings. [399] As if with the radiance of a lamp, you have destroyed the darkness inside this cave. O bull among men! We wish to hear. If it pleases you, please tell me truthfully about your own birth, deeds, gotra and account. O tiger among men! We are from the Ikshvaku lineage and are kshatra-bandhus. O lord! I am Youvanashva's son and am known as Muchukunda. [400] After remaining awake for a long period of time, I was exhausted. My senses were overwhelmed by sleep. I desired to sleep in a secluded place. But just now, someone woke me up. Indeed, that person was reduced to ashes because of his wicked deed. O destroyer of enemies! After that, I noticed your glorious form. Your energy is extremely difficult to tolerate. We are incapable of looking at you for long. O immensely fortunate one! My energy has been destroyed. You deserve to be respected by all embodied beings."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'The illustrious one, the creator of all creatures, was thus addressed by the king. In a deep voice that rumbled like the clouds, he laughed and replied.

'The illustrious one said, "O dear one! My births, deeds and names run into thousands. Since they are infinite, even if I try, I am incapable of enumerating them. Across many births, it may be possible to count the number

of particles of dust on earth. But it is not possible to do that for my qualities, deeds, names and births. O king! The supreme rishis enumerate my births and deeds in three time periods, [401] but cannot reach the end. O dear one! Nevertheless, listen to my words about the present period. In earlier times, Virinchi asked to protect dharma and destroy the asuras who were causing a burden on earth. I descended in the lineage of the Yadus, in Anakadundubhi's house. Since I am Vasudeva's son, I am referred to as Vasudeva. [402] I killed Kalanemi, born as Kamsa, and Pralamba and the others who hated the virtuous. O king! I have ensured that Yavana was consumed through your fierce glance. I have come to this cave to show you my favours. I am devoted towards my devotees and, earlier, you have worshipped me a lot. O royal sage! Seek boons from me. I grant all objects of desire. Those who have satisfied me, never deserve to grieve."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'Thus addressed, Muchukunda was filled with delight and bowed down to him. He remembered Garga's words and knew him to be the god Narayana.

'Muchukunda said, "O lord! People are confounded by your maya. Not realizing their own benefit, they do not worship you. For the sake of happiness, a man becomes attached to the home and women, which give rise to unhappiness. The state of being a human is extremely difficult to obtain. O unblemished one! Without making efforts, he obtains it and is not disfigured in his limbs. However, evil in his intelligence, he does not worship your lotus feet. Like an animal, he is blind and falls into the pit that is the home. O unvanquished one! This period spent by me has been futile. As a king, I have been intoxicated and have increased the prosperity of the kingdom. My intelligence has taken this mortal body to be the atman and I have been attached, with endless anxiety, to sons, wives, treasures and land. This body of mine is like a pot or a wall. [403] With exaggerated pride at being a lord among men, I have surrounded myself with chariots, elephants, horses, foot soldiers and formations. Ignoring you and extremely indomitable, I have roamed around the earth. An excessively intoxicated person thinks about what needs to be done. He lusts after material objects and his avarice increases. He ignores you and suddenly faces you. Like a hungry snake that

licks its tongue and seizes a rat, you appear as a destroyer. Known as a lord of men, earlier, this body roamed around on chariots polished with gold and mad elephants. However, in the form of time, you are impossible to cross and reduce this body to what is known as excrement, worms or ashes. [404] Having wheeled around the directions and conquered them, thus having prevented any future fights, a man seats himself on a supreme throne, worshipped by kings who are his equal. O lord! In the home, he finds pleasure in sexual intercourse with women. But he is led around like a domesticated animal. He performs austerities properly and devotes himself to those tasks. He refrains from objects of desire and performs donations in the hope that he might become the king of heaven. In the process, his thirst increases and there is no happiness. O Achyuta! When the material existence ends for such a wanderer, it is only then that there is an association with virtuous people. You are the lord of the superior and the inferior. It is only after association with the virtuous that one obtains the virtuous end of one's intelligence turning towards you. O lord! I think that you have shown me a favour by automatically severing my attachment towards the kingdom. This is what is desired by virtuous ones who worship you and by kings who rule over the entire earth, desiring the solitude of the forest. I desire nothing other than serving at your feet. O lord! Those who desire nothing crave this as a boon. O Hari! You are the one who grants emancipation. Having worshipped you, which noble person will ask for a boon that leads to the bondage of his atman? O lord! Therefore, I completely cast aside all benedictions that lead to the bonds of the gunas and of sattva, rajas and tamas. You are *niranjana*. [405] You are *nirguna*. [406] You are without duality. You are supreme. You are only knowledge. You are Purusha. I will approach you. For a very long time, I have suffered from the travails of this world and have been tormented by remorse. The six enemies [407] are never satiated and I have never obtained peace. O paramatman! I approach you and seek refuge at your lotus feet. O lord! You are freedom from fear. You are immortality. You are freedom from sorrow. I seek refuge with you. Save me."

'The illustrious one replied, "O universal emperor! O great king! Your intelligence is clear and without blemish. I tempted you with boons, but you

did not fall prey to desire. Know that I tempted you with boons so that you did not get distracted. Those with single-minded devotion towards me are not distracted by benedictions. O king! Those who are not devotees seek to control their minds with *pranayama* [408] and other techniques. But it is seen that their desire is not destroyed and rises again. With your mind immersed in me, roam the earth as you will. May it always be such that your devotion towards me does not waver. You followed the dharma of kshatriyas. Through hunting and other means, you killed creatures. Therefore, controlling yourself and seeking refuge with me, perform austerities so that those sins are destroyed. O king! In your next life, you will be a supreme brahmana who is a well-wisher towards all creatures. You will only then obtain me.”’

Chapter 10(52)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O dear one! Thus favoured by Krishna, the descendant of the Ikshvaku lineage circumambulated him. He bowed down and emerged through the mouth of the cave. He saw that all mortal beings, animals, plants and trees were small in size. Deducing that kali yuga had arrived, he left for the northern direction. [409] The persevering one was full of devotion and engaged in austerities. He was free of attachment and free of doubts. He fixed his mind on Krishna and entered Gandhamadana. He reached Badarikashrama, the abode of Nara and Narayana. Tolerating all the opposite pairs of sentiments, he was tranquil. He performed austerities and worshipped Hari.

'The illustrious one returned to the city, which was still encircled by *yavana*s. [410] He slew the army of the mlechchhas and took their riches to Dvaraka. Urged by Achyuta, men used oxen to convey those riches. At that time, Jarasandha arrived, as the leader of twenty-three akshouhinis. O king! Seeing the waves of enemy soldiers, the two Madhavas imitated the behaviour of humans and quickly fled. Though they were not scared, they pretended to be frightened and cast away that great store of riches. On feet that were as tender as lotus petals, they travelled for many yojanas. On seeing that the two of them were running away, the powerful Magadha laughed. Not realizing the power of those two lords, he pursued them with an army of chariots. After having fled for a long distance, they were exhausted and ascended the summit of the mountain known as Pravarshana. The illustrious one [411] always showers down there. O king! Though they were hidden inside the mountain, he could not discern their trail. Therefore, on every side of the mountain, he placed kindling and lit a fire. The summit of the mountain was eleven yojanas high. When the slopes started to burn, they swiftly leapt up and jumped down on the ground. The two supreme ones of the Yadu lineage were not noticed by the enemy or his followers. O king! They again returned to their own city, where the ocean acted like a moat. Magad-

ha wrongly thought that Bala and Keshava had been burnt down in the fire. Taking his extremely large army with him, he returned to Magadha. The prosperous lord of Anarta was Raivata. Urged by Brahma, he bestowed his daughter, Revati, on Bala. This has been narrated earlier. [412] O extender of the Kuru lineage! In a *svayamvara*, [413] the illustrious Govinda married the daughter of Bhishmaka of Vidarbha. She was born as Shri's portion. While all the worlds looked on, like Tarkshya's son [414] taking away the nectar, he used his force to crush the kings, Shalva and the others who were on Chedi's [415] side, to take her away.'

The king said, 'We have heard that the illustrious one married the beautiful-faced Rukmini, the daughter of Bhishmaka, through the rakshasa mode. [416] O illustrious one! I wish to hear how the infinitely energetic Krishna defeated Magadha, Shalva and others and abducted the maiden. O brahmana! The sweet and sacred account of Krishna removes all impurities from the worlds. After listening to them, who can be satisfied? A person who is accomplished in hearing will always find them to be new.'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'There was a king named Bhishmaka and he was the great lord of Vidarbha. He had five sons, and a daughter with a beautiful face. Rukmi was the eldest and after him were Rukmaratha, Rukmabahu, Rukmakesha and Rukmamali. Their sister was the virtuous Rukmini. Those who came to their home chanted about Mukunda's beauty, valour, qualities and prosperity. Hearing about these, she decided that he was a husband who was her equal. Krishna knew that she was a store of intelligence, auspicious signs, generosity, beauty, good conduct and qualities. He made up his mind that he would marry her, since she was a wife who was his equal. O king! Rukmi hated Krishna. Therefore, though his relatives were willing, he restrained them from bestowing his sister on Krishna. Instead, he wanted to give her to the king of Chedi. Ascertaining this, the dark-eyed princess of Vidarbha became extremely distressed in her mind. Thinking about this, she quickly sent a trustworthy brahmana to Krishna. Having reached Dvaraka, he was brought in by the gatekeepers and saw the original Purusha seated on a golden throne. The lord was devoted to brahmanas. On seeing him, he descended from his own seat and made him sit. He worshipped him, just as

he is himself worshipped by the residents of heaven. When he had eaten and rested, the destination of the virtuous approached him. He massaged his feet with his own hands and gently questioned him. “O chief among the best of brahmanas! Is your observance of dharma approved by the elders? Is it undertaken without any difficulty and are you always happy in your mind? If a brahmana is satisfied with whatever comes his way and follows his dharma without any deviation, then everything can be milked so that he gets all the objects of desire. Even if he becomes the lord of the gods, a discontented person wanders around from one world to another. If a person is content with nothing, when he lies down, all his limbs are free from anxiety. I repeatedly bow my head down before virtuous brahmanas who are satisfied with what they have got and are well-wishers towards all creatures. They are without any ego and are tranquil. O brahmana! Is everything well? If a king protects his kingdom so that the subjects reside happily, he is loved by me. Why have you crossed through impassable paths and come to this fortification? What do you wish for? As long as it is not a secret, tell us everything. What can we do for you?” Parameshthi asked the brahmana these questions, since in his pastimes, he had assumed a body. Everything was described to him.

‘Rukmini said, [417] “O one who is the beauty of the worlds! I have heard about your qualities. If a person hears about you and if that enters through the apertures in the ears, all the torment of the body is destroyed. If a person with eyes sees your form, all the desired objectives are obtained. O Achyuta! I am shameless and my mind has become immersed in you. O Mukunda! No one but you is your equal in greatness, lineage, good conduct, beauty, learning, youth, prosperity and power. What patient maiden from a noble lineage will not choose you as a husband at the right time? O lion among men! You bring delight to the minds of those in the world of men. O dear one! Therefore, as a wife, I have chosen you as a husband. O lord! I have surrendered myself to you. Please accept me. O lotus-eyed one! Like a jackal, let Chedi not swiftly touch the share of the offering meant for the brave king of animals. If I have sufficiently worshipped the illustrious and supreme lord through sacred works, sacrifices, donations, rituals, vows and

other deeds and have honoured gods, brahmanas and seniors, then let Gada's elder brother accept my hand and not Damaghosha's son or anyone else. O unvanquished one! The marriage will take place tomorrow. Come secretly to Vidarbha, surrounded by the leaders of armies. Crush Chedi, the Indra of Magadha and their armies. Use the rakshasa mode to forcibly abduct me and marry me as viryashulka. I will be roaming around in the inner quarters. 'How will I marry you without killing your relatives?' I will tell you about a means. On the preceding day, a great procession to the deity of the lineage, Girija, [418] takes place and the new bride-to-be ventures out. O lotus-eyed one! Great ones like Uma's consort desire to bathe with the dust of your lotus feet, so that their tamas can be destroyed. If I do not obtain your favours, I will emaciate myself through vows and give up my life. I may get what I want after one hundred years."

'The brahmana added, "O lord of the Yadus! This is the secret message I have brought here. Having thought about what needs to be done next, please do it."'

Chapter 10(53)

Shri-Shuka said, 'The descendant of the Yadu lineage heard the message of the princess of Vidarbha. He clasped his [419] hand in his hand, smiled and said the following. The illustrious one said, "My mind is also set on her and I cannot sleep at night. However, I know that because of his hatred, Rukmi has prohibited the marriage. The one with the unblemished limbs has set her mind on me. I will crush those wicked kings in a battle and bring her here, like the flames of a fire rising from kindling." [420] Madhusudana ascertained [421] the nakshatra [422] for Rukmini's wedding. He instructed his charioteer, Daruka, to quickly yoke the chariot. He yoked the horses, Shaibya, Sugriva, Meghapushpa and Balahaka, to the chariot. He brought it there and stood, hands joined in salutation. Shouri ascended the chariot and also made the brahmana mount. With the swift horses, they travelled from Anarta to Vidarbha within a single night.

‘The king, the lord of Kundina, was under the subjugation of affection towards his son. [423] To bestow his own daughter on Shishupala, he had all the required arrangements carried out. The city was cleaned and the streets, roads and quadrangles were sprinkled with water. It was ornamented with colourful festoons, flags and arches. It was full of men and women decorated with necklaces, fragrances, garlands and radiant garments. The beautiful homes were fragrant with aloe and incense. O king! The gods, the ancestors and the brahmanas were worshipped in the decreed way. They were fed according to the rites and auspicious benedictions were pronounced. The maiden, possessing excellent teeth, was bathed well and went through all the auspicious rites. She was attired in a pair of new silken garments and adorned with excellent ornaments. For the bride’s protection, the best of brahmanas chanted mantras from the Rig, Sama and Yajur Vedas. Priests who were skilled in the Atharva Veda offered oblations for pacifying the planets. The king, supreme among those who knew about rituals, gave brahmanas gold, silver, garments, sesamum mixed with molasses and cows. For his son’s sake, King Damaghosha, the lord of Chedi, had mantras pronounced and did everything else that was required for prosperity. He travelled to Kundina, surrounded by formations of elephants exuding musth, chariots with golden chains, infantry, horses and other soldiers. The lord of Vidarbha came forward to meet and honour him. Delighted, he made him reside in a residence that had been constructed. Thousands of those who were on Chedi’s side arrived—Shalva, Jarasandha, Dantavakra, Viduratha, Poundraka and others. They hated Krishna and Rama and wanted to ensure that Chedi got the maiden. “Surrounded by the Yadus, if Krishna, Rama and the others come here to abduct her, we will collectively fight against them.” Making up their minds in this way, all those kings on earth arrived, complete with armies and mounts.

‘The illustrious Rama heard about the arrangements made by the enemy kings. Since Krishna had gone alone to abduct the maiden, he suspected that there might be an encounter. He was overcome with affection towards his brother. With a large army consisting of elephants, horses, chariots and foot soldiers, he quickly went to Kundina. Bhishmaka’s beautiful daughter

wished for Hari's arrival. But since she did not see the brahmana return, she started to think. "Alas! My fortune is limited. Only a night [424] remains before my wedding. The lotus-eyed one has not arrived and I do not know the reason. The brahmana who went with my message has also not returned so far. Perhaps the one with the unblemished atman noticed something reprehensible in me. Why has he not made efforts to come and accept my hand? I am unfortunate. The creator [425] and Maheshvara are not favourably disposed towards me. The virtuous goddess, Gouri, Rudrani, Girija, is also unfavourable." With her mind stolen by Govinda, the maiden thought in this way. Though she knew that there was time, her eyes were filled with tears and she did not open them. O king! In this way, the bride waited for Govinda's arrival. Her left thigh, arm and eye started to twitch, indicating something pleasant. Instructed by Krishna, that excellent brahmana came and saw the divine princess in the inner quarters, where she was confined. The virtuous one with the beautiful smile knew about the signs and could see his cheerful face and confident stride. She asked. He told her that the descendant of the Yadu lineage had arrived and that he had uttered truthful words about taking her away. Hearing that he had arrived, the princess of Vidarbha was delighted in her mind. Since she could not see anything agreeable to offer to the brahmana, she bowed down before him. [426]

'Hearing that Rama and Krishna had arrived, eager to witness his daughter's marriage, to the sound of the blaring of trumpets, he [427] went forward to receive them, bearing appropriate gifts. He presented them with madhuparka, drinks, sparkling garments and other desired gifts, worshipping them in the decreed way. The immensely intelligent one arranged a handsome place for them to reside in. As is appropriate, he arranged for the hospitality of the soldiers and the companions. He also honoured the assembled kings with all the objects of desire, according to valour, age, strength and wealth. The residents of the city of Vidarbha heard that Krishna had arrived. They came and drank in his lotus face, using their eyes like cupped hands. "Rukmini deserves to be his wife and not anyone else's. [428] His form is without any blemish. He is the appropriate husband for Bhishmaka's daughter. May the creator of the three worlds be satisfied with whatever little good deeds

we have performed. May Achyuta show us his favours and may he accept the hand of the princess of Vidarbha." Bound to her in their love, the citizens of the city spoke in this way. Protected by soldiers, the maiden left the inner quarters to go to Ambika's shrine. Meditating entirely on Mukunda's lotus feet, she went out on foot to see Bhavani's tender feet. She was silent and was accompanied by her mothers and surrounded by her female friends. The king's brave and armoured guards protected her, their weapons upraised. Drums, conch shells, kettledrums, trumpets and other drums were sounded. There were thousands of foremost courtesans, bearing many kinds of gifts and offerings. The wives of brahmanas were decorated with garlands, fragrances, garments and ornaments. Sutas, magadhas and bandis also advanced, surrounding the bride. Reaching the shrine of the goddess, she washed her lotus hands and feet. She touched water and purified herself. Tranquil, she entered and approached Ambika. Aged wives of brahmanas were accomplished in the rituals and showed her how to worship Bhavani, Bhava's wife, and Bhava himself. "O Ambika! [429] O Shiva's wife! I constantly bow down before you and your children. Please allow the illustrious Krishna to become my husband." She separately used water, fragrances, unbroken grain, incense, garments, necklaces, garlands, ornaments and many kinds of presents, offerings and rays of lamps for the worship. The married wives [430] of the brahmanas also worshipped her with salt, fried cakes, betel leaf, *kanthasutra*s, [431] fruits and sugar cane. The women gave her [432] what remained of their offerings and pronounced benedictions over her. The bride bowed down to them and to the queens and accepted the remnants of the offerings.

'Completing the vow of silence, she emerged from Ambika's shrine. She held on to a female servant's hand with her hand, ornamented with jewels. She was like the god's maya and confounded those who were patient. She was slender of waist and her face was ornamented with earrings. She was *shyama* [433] and a bejewelled girdle encircled her hips. She had budding breasts and her darting eyes seemed to be scared of her own hair. Her smile was sweet and her red lips were like bimba fruit, glowing against teeth that were like jasmine buds. She walked with the stride of a supreme swan. Jin-

gling and well-crafted anklets beautified her feet. On seeing her, all the brave and famous kings who had assembled lost their senses. Their hearts were afflicted at the sight of her. The kings looked at her broad smiles and bashful looks. The desire for her made them lose their senses. Bewildered, they fell down on the ground from their elephants, chariots and horses. Using the guise of the procession, she displayed her own beauty to Hari alone. She advanced slowly on feet that were like lotus buds. She was waiting for the arrival of the illustrious one and used the nails of her left hand to brush away her hair. As she cast bashful and sidelong glances towards the kings, she saw Achyuta. The princess was eager to mount his chariot and while the enemies looked on, Krishna abducted her. He raised her up on to his chariot, marked with the signs of Suparna. Madhava repulsed that circle of kings. With Rama at the forefront, he slowly left, like a lion seizing his share from the midst of jackals. The proud enemies, with Jarasandha at the forefront, could not tolerate their own defeat and the destruction of their fame. "Alas! Shame on our fame. We are armed with bows. Yet, the gopas have taken her away, like deer taking something away from lions."'

Chapter 10(54)

Shri-Shuka said, 'All of them were greatly enraged. Armouring themselves, they ascended their vehicles, each of them surrounded by his own respective army. Holding aloft raised bows, they followed. The leaders of the Yadava army saw them descend. O king! They stood there and faced them, twanging their own bows. They [434] were accomplished in the use of weapons. Mounted on the backs of horses and elephants and astride chariots, they released showers of arrow, like clouds pouring down water on mountains. The slender-waisted one saw that her lord's army was enveloped with arrows and her eyes were agitated with fear. Ashamed, she glanced at his face. The illustrious one laughed and said, "O one with the beautiful eyes! Do not be scared. Those on your side will instantly destroy the enemy's forces." The brave ones, Gada, Samkarshana and the others, could not

tolerate this display of valour. They used iron arrows to slaughter the horses, elephants and chariots. The heads of crores of charioteers, horses and elephants fell down on the ground, along with earrings, diadems and headdresses. Hands with swords, clubs, bows and arrows, arms, thighs, legs and the heads of horses, donkeys, elephants, camels, asses and mortals were strewn around. The Vrishnis desired victory. Seeing that their soldiers and forces were slaughtered, the kings, with Jarasandha at the forefront, were disheartened and left. They approached Shishupala, who was afflicted at his promised wife having been abducted. His colour had faded. His enterprise was gone and his face was dry. They spoke to him. "O tiger among men! Give up this distress in your mind. O king! Among embodied beings, the agreeable and the disagreeable are not seen to be permanent. This is like the wooden image of a woman being made to dance according to the wishes of the puppeteer. In that way, happiness and misery in this world are under the control of the lord." "In encounters with Shouri, with twenty-three akshouhinis, I have been defeated seventeen times and have been victorious only once. [435] Nevertheless, I never rejoice or grieve. I know that everything in this world is driven by time and destiny. All of us are lords of leaders of valiant ones. However, we have now been defeated by a small number of Yadus who are protected by Krishna. The enemy has triumphed because destiny favours them now. Like that, when time turns and becomes favourable towards us, we will be victorious." Thus comforted by his friends, Chedi and his followers returned to his city. The remaining kings also left for their own respective cities.

'Rukmi hated Krishna and could not tolerate that Krishna had married his sister through the rakshasa mode. Surrounding himself with an akshouhini, the powerful one followed Krishna from the rear. The intolerant Rukmi was armoured. In the hearing of all the kings, the mighty-armed one had armoured himself. With a bow and an arrow, he had taken a pledge. "I will kill Krishna in a battle and bring Rukmini back. Otherwise, I will not enter Kundina. I am stating this truthfully." Having said this, he mounted his chariot and told the charioteer, "Quickly urge the horses towards the spot where Krishna is, so that there can be an encounter with him. Today, using

sharp arrows, I will take away the pride that the evil-minded cowherd has about his valour. He has used violence to abduct my sister." The boastful and evil-minded one did not know about the measure of the lord's prowess. Govinda was alone on his chariot and he challenged him, "Wait. Stay." He drew his bow back extremely firmly and struck Krishna with three arrows. He said, "O worst of the Yadu lineage! Wait for a while. You are stealing my sister, like a crow taking away oblations. O wicked one! O one who uses maya! O one who fights using deceit! Today, I will rob you of your pride. Before you are struck with my arrows and forced to lie down, release the maiden." Krishna smiled and used six arrows to pierce and shatter Rukmi's bow. He struck the four horses with eight arrows, the charioteer with two and the standard with three. Picking up another bow, he pierced Krishna with five arrows. Despite being struck with floods of arrows, Achyuta severed his bow again. He picked up another one, but the undecaying one severed that too. Whatever be the weapon he chose to pick up, club, spear, trident, shield, sword, lance, javelin—Hari severed all these. At this, he angrily leapt down from his chariot. Wishing to kill him, with a sword in his hand, he rushed towards Krishna, like an insect towards a fire. As he descended, he [436] used arrows to shatter the sword and the shield into fragments that were like sesamum seeds. He seized a sharp sword and got ready to kill Rukmi. On seeing that he was getting ready to kill her brother, Rukmini became agitated with fear. The virtuous one fell down at her husband's feet and piteously spoke these words. "O lord of yoga! O one whose atman is immeasurable! O god of the gods! O lord of the universe! O fortunate one! O mighty-armed one! You should not kill my brother." Because of her fear, her limbs trembled. The grief made her mouth dry up and tears choked her throat. Because of her fright, her necklace, made out of molten gold, was dislodged. She seized his feet and out of compassion, he desisted. He tied up that evil-acting person with a piece of cloth. He disfigured him by shaving him, but left some of his beard and hair untouched.

'Like elephants destroying lotuses, the foremost and valiant ones among the Yadus crushed the extraordinary enemy soldiers. Having approached Krishna's presence, they saw Rukmi there. He was in a condition that was

close to having been killed. [437] The lord, Samkarshana, was filled with compassion and freed the one who had been bound. He told the illustrious Krishna, "O Krishna! What you have done is wicked. It is contemptible. He is a relative and you have disfigured him by shaving off his hair and beard. This is tantamount to killing him. O virtuous lady! [438] Concerned and thinking about your brother's disfigurement, you should not hate us. A man enjoys the fruits of what he himself has done and no one else is responsible for his happiness or unhappiness. Even if a relative commits a crime that deserves his being killed, a relative should not be killed. Instead, he should be cast aside. Since he has been killed because of his own sin, what is the need to kill him again? Prajapati [439] determined a dharma for kshatriyas, following which, a brother must kill his own brother. Nothing is more terrible than this. Those who are proud and blind because of their prosperity and intoxication disrespect others because of kingdoms, land, wealth, women, honour, power, or other reasons. Your perception is not level-headed. [440] He has harboured ill intentions towards all creatures. He has always acted against your well-wishers. Yet, like an ignorant person, you are thinking of behaving kindly towards him. Fashioned by the god's maya, men are bewildered about the atman. Taking the body to be the atman, they think of friends, enemies and neutral parties. There is only one supreme atman, existent in all bodies. However, like the illumination in the sky, foolish people perceive them as many. [441] Composed of material elements, the breath of life and gunas, the body has a beginning and an end. The body does not know about the atman, and samsara is imposed on it. O virtuous lady! Since nothing else is real, the atman has no association or disassociation with anything else. It is the cause of its own perception, just as the sun gives perception to its form through the sense of vision. [442] The body goes through birth and other transformations, but this is not true of the atman. This is like the waxing and the waning of the moon through its kalas [443] and its death during *kuhu*. [444] When a man is asleep, he sees himself and enjoys objects and the fruits of these, though these are not real. In that way, an ignorant person experiences material existence. The grief that is drying you up and confounding you arises out of ignorance. O one with the sweet smiles! Destroy

it with true knowledge and regain your natural self." The illustrious and slender one was thus enlightened by Rama. She cast aside her distress and used her intelligence to steady her mind.

'The adversaries only left him [445] his life. His forces and radiance were destroyed. His own wishes were frustrated and he remembered his disfigurement. He constructed a great city named Bhojapura, [446] so that he could live there. "I will not enter Kundina until I have killed the evil-minded Krishna and brought back my younger sister." Having pledged this, he angrily resided there. O extender of the Kuru lineage! Defeating the lords of the earth, the illustrious one brought Bhishmaka's daughter back to the city. He followed the rites and married her. At that time, in every house in the city of the Yadus, men observed great festivities. O king! Their minds were only devoted to Krishna, the lord of the Yadus. Men and women rejoiced, adorned in earrings studded with jewels and brought many kinds of gifts to the bride and the groom, who were attired in excellent garments. Flags to Indra were raised in the city of the Vrishnis. There were colourful garlands, garments and arches encrusted with gems. The city was beautiful. Auspicious arrangements were made at every door. There were pots filled with water, aloe, incense and lamps. The roads were sprinkled with musth from elephants belonging to the beloved kings who had been invited. The elephants were used to decorate the entrances with areca nut and plantain trees. The Kurus, Srinjayas, Kaikeyas, Vidarbhas, Yadus and Kuntis roamed around here and there, happily meeting each other. Here and there, they heard the account of Rukmini's abduction being sung and the kings and the princesses were extremely amazed. O king! The residents of the city of Dvaraka were extremely delighted to see Krishna, Shri's consort, united with Rukmini, who was Rama [447] herself.'

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Shri-Shuka said, 'Kama was part of Vasudeva's portion and was earlier, burnt down by Rudra in his rage. [448] So that he might get his body back, he

resorted to him. [449] Through Krishna's seed, he was born as the son of the princess of Vidarbha. He was known as Pradyumna and he was not inferior to his father in any way. Shambara recognized him to be his enemy. [450] He could assume any form at will and abducted the child when he was not ten days old. Having hurled him into the sea, he returned to his own house. An extremely powerful fish swallowed him. Along with others, this fish was caught in a large net cast by fishermen. The fishermen brought the extraordinary fish as a gift to Shambara. The cooks took it to the kitchen and started to cut it up with a knife. Finding the child in the stomach, they took him to Mayavati. [451] Her mind was suspicious, but Narada arrived and told her everything, about the boy's birth and about how he had entered the stomach of the fish. She was Kama's illustrious wife, known by the name of Rati. When her husband's body had been burnt down, she had been waiting for him to get back his body. Shambara had entrusted her with the task of preparing rice in the kitchen. Knowing that the infant was Kamadeva, she started to feel love towards the child. Within a short period of time, Krishna's son became a youth. All the women who looked at him were captivated. O dear one! His eyes were as large as the petals of a lotus and his arms were long. He was the most handsome in the world of men. Rati glanced at him with bashful and loving glances, with her eyebrows arched. She lovingly approached him, desiring intercourse. Krishna's illustrious son told her, "O mother! Your mind is perverse. You have transgressed the sentiments of a mother and are behaving like a lover." Rati replied, "You are Narayana's son. Shambara abducted you from your home. O lord! You are Kama and I am Rati, your rightful wife. When you were not even ten days old, the asura Shambara hurled you into the ocean. You were swallowed by a fish. O lord! I have got you back from its stomach. This enemy of yours is invincible. He knows one hundred different kinds of maya and is impossible to defeat. However, using maya, stupefaction and other techniques, you will slay him. With her son gone, your mother is grieving like a female curlew. Overwhelmed with affection towards her son, she is distressed, like a cow afflicted on account of its calf." Mayavati knew about *mahamaya*, [452] which

was capable of destroying all other kinds of maya. She bestowed this knowledge on the great-souled Pradyumna.

'He approached Shambara and challenged him to an encounter. He hurled all kinds of abuses at him, using this abuse to generate a conflict. He was provoked by these demeaning words, like a serpent struck with the foot. He emerged, with a club in his hand. His eyes were coppery red with rage. He swiftly whirled his club around and hurled it at the great-souled Pradyumna, roaring and making a sound that was like the bolt of thunder. As it descended, the illustrious Pradyumna repulsed the club with his own club. O king! Then, filled with anger, he hurled his club towards the enemy. The asura resorted to the maya of the daityas that had been taught to him by Maya. He took to the sky and showered down weapons on Krishna's son. Obstructed by this shower of weapons, Rukmini's maharatha son used the great knowledge, full of sattva, which could crush all kinds of maya. The daitya used hundreds of modes used by guhyakas, gandharvas, *pishacha*s, [453] serpents and rakshasas. However, Krishna's son destroyed all of these. He raised his sharp sword and used force to severe Shambara's head, with a copper-coloured beard, diadem and earrings, from his body. The residents of heaven praised him and showered down flowers. His wife could travel through the sky. Through the sky, she took him back to the city. [454]

'O king! The excellent inner quarters were filled with hundreds of excellent women. With his wife, he entered there through the sky, like a cloud accompanied by lightning. The women saw him, with a complexion that was as dark as the cloud. He was attired in a yellow silken garment. His arms were long and his eyes were coppery red. He possessed a handsome and smiling lotus face, ornamented with blue and curly hair. They took him to be Krishna and, ashamed, hid themselves here and there. Slowly, the women noticed slight differences in the signs. [455] They were extremely surprised and happily approached him and the one who was a jewel among women. The black-eyed princess of Vidarbha, sweet in speech, remembered her own son, who had been destroyed, and love oozed out of her breasts. "Who is this lotus-eyed jewel among men? Whom does he belong to? Who has borne her in her womb? Who is the one [456] who has been obtained by

him? My son was lost and was taken away from the delivery chamber. If he is alive somewhere, his age and beauty will be like this one's. The one who has come here is similar in form to the wielder of the Sharnga bow. How is this possible? His structure, limbs, gait, voice, smiles and glances are like his. He must certainly be the son I bore in my womb. That is the reason I feel this great love for him. My left arm is throbbing." [457] While the princess of Vidarbha was speculating in this way, Uttamashloka, Devaki's son, arrived there, along with Devaki and Anankadundubhi. Though he knew the truth, the illustrious Janardana remained silent. It was Narada who recounted everything, about the abduction by Shambara and everything else. The women in Krishna's inner quarters heard this extremely wonderful account. They welcomed the one who had returned after many years, as if he had come back from the dead. Devaki, Vasudeva, Krishna, Rama, the women and Rukmini embraced the couple and were filled with joy. Hearing that Pradyumna, who had been destroyed, had returned, the residents of Dvaraka exclaimed, "Wonderful. It is good fortune that the child has returned, as if from the dead." His form was exactly like that of his father's and in private, his mothers repeatedly worshipped him and were attracted to him, taking him to be their lord. Indeed, this is not at all surprising. His form was like a reflection of the form of the one who is Rama's refuge. What need be said of other women? They remembered Kama, when he came within range of their vision.'

Chapter 10(56)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Satrajit caused an offence to Krishna. Therefore, he made efforts to give him the Syamantaka jewel and bestow his own daughter on him.'

The king asked, 'O brahmana! What offence did Satrajit cause to Krishna? Where did the Syamantaka jewel come from? Why did he bestow his daughter on Hari?'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'Surya was a great friend of Satrajit, his devotee. He was satisfied with him and happily gave him the Syamantaka jewel. O king! Wearing the radiant gem around his neck, he entered Dvaraka, as resplendent as the sun. Such was its brilliance, that he was himself almost unnoticed. When people looked at him from a distance, their eyes were blinded by the radiance. They suspected that he was Surya. They went and told the illustrious one, who was playing with dice. "O Narayana! O wielder of the conch shell, chakra and mace! O Damodara! O lotus-eyed one! O Govinda! O delight of the Yadu lineage! We bow down before you. O lord of the universe! To see you, the sun god is coming here. The circle of his fierce rays is robbing men of their sight. The bulls among the gods are seeking to search out your progress in the three worlds. O lord! Having now realized that you have hidden yourself among the Yadus, Aja [458] has come here." Hearing these childish words, the lotus-eyed one laughed. He smiled and said, "This is not the sun god. It is Satrajit, with his blazing jewel." Satrajit entered his prosperous house. He made brahmanas perform the auspicious rites. He entered the house meant for the gods and made them instate the jewel there. O lord! Every day, the jewel produced eight *bhara*s [459] of gold. In the place where the jewel was kept and was worshipped, there was no famine, untimely death from calamities and snakes, mental or physical disease. There was nothing inauspicious from those who were deceitful. On one occasion, Shouri desired the jewel, so that it could be given to the king of the Yadus. [460] However, he was so greedy about wealth that he refused to give it, oblivious of the transgression involved in this.

'On one occasion, wearing the extremely radiant jewel around his neck, Prasena [461] mounted a horse. He went to the forest on a hunt and wandered around. A maned lion killed Prasena and his horse and took the jewel away. When it entered a mountain, it was killed by Jambavat, who desired the jewel. In his cave, he gave his son the jewel, to play with. Unable to see his brother, Satrajit was tormented on account of his brother. "He went to the forest, wearing the jewel around his neck. Perhaps Krishna has killed my brother." The people heard this and it was passed around, from one ear to another ear. The illustrious one heard this and wished to wipe away the ill

fame that was being attributed to him. With some citizens, he followed Prasena's footsteps. In the forest, they saw Prasena and his horse, slain by the lion. The people saw it on the slope of the mountain, killed by the bear. [462] The terrible cave of the king of the bears was covered in darkness. Leaving the subjects outside, the illustrious one entered it alone. There, he saw that the excellent jewel had been made into a child's toy. Making up his mind to take it away, he stationed himself near the child. Not having seen a man before, as if in fear, the nurse maid cried out. Hearing this, Jambavat, supreme among strong ones, angrily rushed forward. He did not realize that the illustrious one was his own master. Taking himself to be an ordinary man, he angrily started to fight with him. Both of them wished to triumph against the other and there was a tumultuous duel in the course of the fight. Like hawks fighting over a piece of meat, they fought with weapons, stones and trees. It continued for twenty-eight days and nights. Incessantly, they struck each other with hard blows of the fists that were like strikes of the vajra. As he was struck by blows from Krishna's fists, the strong joints in his limbs were crushed. His spirit started to diminish. He started to perspire all over his body. Amazed, he exclaimed, "I know you. You are the breath of life, energy and strength of all living creatures. You are Vishnu, the ancient being. You are the powerful Vishnu, the lord of everything. You are the creator of all the creators of the universe. You are the reality behind creation. You are time. You are the lord of all subjugators. Among all atmans, you are the supreme atman. The slight rage in your sidelong glance agitated the ocean, full of crocodiles and *timingila*s. [463] It parted and granted you passage. As a mark of your own fame, you constructed a bridge and set Lanka on fire. Using arrows, you brought down the heads of the rakshasas on the ground." O great king! Ascertaining that he had got to know, the illustrious Achyuta, Devaki's son, spoke to the king of the bears. He was filled with great compassion towards his devotee. The lotus-eyed one touched him with his auspicious hand. In a voice that rumbled like the clouds, he said, "O lord of the bears! I have come to this cave for the sake of the jewel. I intend to use this jewel to wipe away the false accusation that has been levelled against me." Addressed in this way, as a mark of his wor-

ship, he happily bestowed the jewel and his own daughter, Jambavati, on Krishna.

'The people saw Shouri enter the cave and did not see him emerge again. They waited for twelve days. Then, miserable, they returned to their own city. Devaki, Queen Rukmini, Anankadundubhi and other well-wishers and kin heard that Krishna had not emerged from the cave. They grieved. Grieving, the residents of Dvaraka abused Satrajit. They presented themselves before Mahamaya Durga and prayed for Krishna's return. The goddess pronounced her benedictions on them. Successful in his objective, Hari manifested himself, along with his wife, and caused them delight. They got Hrishikesha back, as if he had returned from the dead. He had his wife with him and the jewel was around his neck. All of them engaged in great festivities. The illustrious one summoned Satrajit to the assembly. In the king's presence, he told him how he had got the jewel back and gave it to him. Ashamed, he [464] accepted the jewel, hanging his head down in embarrassment. Tormented because of his wicked behaviour, he returned to his own residence. He thought about this sin of his and was anxious because of a conflict with those who were more powerful. "How will I wipe away the stain on me? How will I placate Achyuta? What will be good for me? How will people no longer condemn me as short-sighted, inferior and foolish, and as one who is greedy for riches? I will bestow the jewel, and my daughter, who is a jewel among women, on him. That is the appropriate way. There is no other means for me to find peace." Having used his intelligence, he arrived at this course of action. Satrajit himself made arrangements to gift the jewel, and his own auspicious daughter, to Krishna. Following the proper rites, the illustrious one married Satyabhama. She possessed good conduct, beauty, generosity and other qualities and there were many who had sought her hand. O king! The illustrious one said, "We will not accept the jewel. You are the god's [465] devotee. Thereby, we will also enjoy a share in the fruits."'

Chapter 10(57)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Though he knew the truth, Govinda heard that the Pandavas and Kunti had been burnt down. [466] To do what needed to be done for the lineage, along with Rama, he went to the land of the Kurus. They met Bhishma, Kripa, Vidura, Gandhari and Drona. Sharing in their grief, they exclaimed, "Alas! What a great misery!" O king! Finding this opportunity, Akrura and Kritavarma told Shatadhanva, [467] "Why should we not seize the jewel? Satrajit promised each of us his daughter, who is like a jewel. But neglecting us, he gave her to Krishna. Why should he not follow his brother?" [468] Urged by them and goaded by his avarice, he killed Satrajit while he was asleep. In this way, the evil one, worst among the wicked, shortened his own lifespan. While the women shrieked and screamed, like those without a protector, he killed him, the way a butcher slays an animal. Seizing the jewel, he left. Satyabhama saw that her father had been killed and was immersed in grief. She lamented, "Alas, father! I have been slain." She lost her senses. She placed the dead body in a vat filled with oil and went to Gajasahvya. [469] Though Krishna already knew the truth, she was tormented and wanted to tell him about her father's death. O king! When those two lords [470] heard this, they imitated the behaviour of the world of men. "Alas! What a great misery for us." With tears in their eyes, they grieved.

'With his elder brother and his wife, the illustrious one returned to the city. He prepared to kill Shatadhanva and seize the jewel back. Learning that these efforts were being made, he was scared and wished to save his own life. He approached Kritavarma for help, but was told, "I will not show disrespect to the two lords, Rama and Krishna. If a person commits an offence against them, how can he hope to obtain peace? Because of their enmity, Kamsa and his followers lost their lives and their prosperity. After fighting against them in seventeen encounters, Jarasandha lost his own chariot." Refused in this way, he went to Akrura and sought his help. However, he also said, "If a person knows about the strengths of those two lords, how can he oppose them? In his pastimes, the unvanquished one creates, preserves and destroys the universe. The creators of the universe are bewildered and do not know about his endeavours. When he was seven years old,

he uprooted a mountain and held it up on a single hand. Though he was a child, he playfully held it up, like an infant holding up a mushroom. I bow down before the illustrious Krishna, the performer of extraordinary deeds. He is infinite. He is the original cause. He is the one who is inside all atmans. I bow down before him." Refused by him too, Shatadhanva entrusted the great jewel in his care. Ascending a horse that could travel for one hundred yojanas, he left. O king! Rama and Janardana ascended the chariot that had Garuda on its standard. On extremely swift horses, they pursued the one who had caused harm to their senior. In a grove on the outskirts of Mithila, the horse fell down and died. Abandoning it, the terrified one fled on foot and Krishna angrily pursued him. He fled on foot and the illustrious one also pursued him on foot. With the chakra that was sharp at the edges, he severed his head. He searched his upper and lower garment for the jewel. Unable to find the jewel, Krishna went to his elder brother's presence and said, "Shatadhanva has been killed in vain. The jewel isn't here." Bala replied, "It is evident that Shatadhanva has entrusted the jewel to some other man. Return to the city and search him out. I wish to see the king of Videha. I love him a great deal." O king! Saying this, the descendant of the Yadu lineage entered Mithila. On seeing him, the lord of Mithila was delighted in his mind and immediately stood up. He worshipped him with all the objects of worship, following the prescribed rites. The lord remained in Mithila for some years. Filled with affection, the great-souled Janaka honoured him. It is at this time that Dhritarashtra's son, Suyodhana, learnt how to fight with the club. [471]

'Keshava returned to Dvaraka. He wished to do what would bring pleasure to his beloved. He told her about Shatadhanva's death and about his inability to find the jewel. Since his relative [472] had been killed, he had the funeral rites performed. Along with his well-wishers, the illustrious one attended all these funeral rites. Akrura and Kritavarma heard about Shatandhanva's death. Those two instigators were filled with dread. In their fear, they fled from Dvaraka. When Akrura went on exile, the residents of Dvaraka suffered from calamities of adhidaivika and adhibhoutika kinds. [473] They were tormented by physical and mental ailments. O dear one! Some

forget what I have said before. The sages find an abode in him. How could calamities manifest themselves when he resided there? [474] When the god did not shower down, the lord of Kashi bestowed his own daughter, Gandini, on Shvaphalaka, [475] who had arrived there. It then rained in the kingdom of Kashi. His son, Akrura, possessed similar powers. The god showered down wherever he was. There were no calamities or epidemics. Janardana heard the words of the elders, but decided that this was not the only reason. [476] He summoned Akrura and spoke to him. He honoured and greeted him and engaged him in delightful conversation. He knew what is in all hearts and knew the truth. He smiled and said, "O Danapati! Shatadhanva must have left the prosperous Syamantaka jewel in your care. We already knew that. Since Satrajit had no son, his daughter's sons should accept his inheritance. [477] After performing the water rites, they should repay his debts and accept whatever is left. O one who is excellent in vows! However, others will find it impossible to bear. Therefore, let the jewel remain with you. But my elder brother does not completely believe this about the jewel. [478] O immensely fortunate one! Hence, show it to my relatives and bring them peace of mind. You are now incessantly performing sacrifices on golden altars." [479] Shvaphalaka's son was reassured with these words. He brought the jewel, as radiant as the sun and wrapped in a piece of cloth, and handed it over. The lord showed Syamantaka to his relatives and removed the stain ascribed to him. He then returned the jewel again. If a person reads, hears or remembers this extremely auspicious account of the illustrious lord Vishnu's glorious valour, all his sins are destroyed. His ill fame and wicked deeds are driven away and he obtains peace.'

Chapter 10(58)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Once, to see the Pandavas, the prosperous Purushottama went and presented himself in Indraprastha. [480] He was surrounded by Yuyudhana [481] and others. On seeing Mukunda, the lord of everything, arrive, all the brave Parthas [482] simultaneously stood up, as if the foremost

breath of life had arrived. [483] The brave ones embraced Achyuta and all their sins were destroyed from the touch of his limbs. Glancing at his affectionate and smiling face, they were filled with delight. He bowed down at the feet of Yudhishthira and Bhima and greeted them. [484] He embraced Phalguna [485] and was honoured by the twins. [486] When Krishna was seated on an excellent seat, the newly married and unblemished Krishna [487] approached him slowly and bashfully and honoured him. In that way, Satyaki was honoured and welcomed, by the Parthas. The others were also honoured and welcomed and sat down on different seats. He met Pritha and showed her his respects. Her eyes were wet with tears of affection and she embraced him. He asked his father's sister, and her daughter-in-law, about their welfare and they asked him about his relatives. She [488] was overwhelmed by her love. Her voice choked and her eyes were full of tears. She remembered the many kinds of hardships. She spoke to the one who shows himself so as to remove hardships. "O Krishna! You are our protector. Ever since you remembered your relatives and sent my brother [489] as a messenger, we have been well. You are our well-wisher and are the atman of the universe. You do not have any delusions about 'mine' and 'someone else's'. Nevertheless, you reside in the hearts of those who constantly remember you and remove their hardships." Yudhishthira said, "O lord! We are inferior in intelligence. The lords of yoga find it extremely difficult to see you. I do not know what good deeds we have done that we should see you." Requested by the king, [490] the lord happily resided there during the months of the rainy season, generating delight in the eyes of the residents of Indraprastha.

'One day, Vijaya, with the ape on his banner, mounted his chariot. He grasped the Gandiva bow and the two inexhaustible quivers and armoured himself. [491] Along with Krishna, he went to a large and desolate forest that was full of many predatory beasts and deer. To hunt, the destroyer of enemy heroes entered it. Using his arrows, he pierced tigers, boar, buffaloes, *ruru* antelopes, *sharabha*s, *gavaya*s, rhinos, deer, hares and porcupines. [492] Since there was a special auspicious occasion, the servants took the ones that were appropriate as sacrificial offerings to the king. [493] After this, thirsty and exhausted, Bibhatsu [494] went to the Yamuna. The two maharathas touched the

sparkling water and drank it. The two Krishnas [495] saw a maiden, beautiful to behold, roaming around. Her hips were beautiful. Her teeth were excellent and her face was lovely. Sent by his friend, Phalguna [496] approached that excellent woman and asked her. "O one with the beautiful hips! Who are you? Whom do you belong to? Where have you come from? What do you wish to do? O beautiful one! I think that you wish for a husband. Tell me everything." Kalindi replied, "I am the sun god's daughter. Vishnu is the granter of boons and deserves to be worshipped. Desiring him as a husband, I have resorted to supreme austerities. O brave one! Other than the one who is Shri's abode, I will not accept anyone as a husband. The illustrious Mukunda is the refuge of those without a protector. May he be pleased with me. I am known as Kalindi and I will reside in the waters of the Yamuna, until I see Achyuta. My father has constructed a residence for me there." Gudakesha [497] reported this exactly to Vasudeva, though he already knew about this. He [498] placed her on his chariot and went to Dharmaraja. Requested by Krishna, Vishvakarma had earlier constructed a colourful and supremely wonderful city for the Parthas. [499] Desiring to bring pleasure to those who were his own, the illustrious one resided there. So that Khandava forest could be given to Agni, he became Arjuna's charioteer. O king! Satisfied, Agni gave Arjuna a bow, a chariot yoked to white horses, two inexhaustible quivers and armour that weapons could not pierce. [500] Maya was freed from the fire and built an assembly hall for his friend. [501] It is there that Duryodhana's vision got confused and he mixed up water and ground. After having sought and obtained leave from his well-wishers, surrounded by Satyaki and other foremost ones, he [502] returned to Dvaraka again. When an extremely auspicious nakshatra was in the ascendant and the conjunctions were favourable, he married Kalindi. He spread great delight and brought everything auspicious to those who were his own.

'Vinda and Anuvinda from Avanti were Duryodhana's followers. Their own sister was attracted to Krishna, but they forbade her from choosing him at a svayamvara. O king! Mitravinda was the daughter of Rajadhidevi, his father's sister. [503] While all the kings looked on, Krishna forcibly abducted her.

‘O king! King Nagnajit of Kosala was extremely devoted to dharma. He had the princess Satya, also known as Nagnajiti, as his daughter. Kings were not allowed to marry her until they had vanquished seven bulls with sharp horns. [504] These were vicious and extremely difficult to vanquish. They could not tolerate the smell of brave ones. The illustrious lord of the Satvatas heard that she could be won by vanquishing the bulls. Surrounded by an extremely large army, he went to the capital of Kosala. [505] The lord of Kosala was delighted. He rose from his seat and offered him a seat and many other valuable gifts of worship. He was honoured back in turn. On seeing all the assembled suitors, the king’s daughter desired Rama’s consort. “If I have been firm in my vows, may my unblemished wishes come true and may I get him as a husband. The dust of his lotus feet is borne on their heads by Shri, the one born from the lotus, [506] Girisha and the guardians of the worlds. In his pastimes, in the course of time, he assumes bodies to protect the ordinances he himself has created. How can the illustrious one be satisfied with me?” Having worshipped him again, he [507] said, “O Narayana! O lord of the universe! You are complete in your own bliss. What can an insignificant person like me do for you?” O descendant of the Kuru lineage! Delighted, the illustrious one accepted the offered seat. In a voice that rumbled like the clouds, he smiled and said, “O Indra among men! If kings follow their own dharma and are bound by it, wise people condemn asking anything from them. Nevertheless, out of affection towards you, I am asking you for your daughter, but we will not pay any price in return.” [508] The king replied, “O protector! In this world, who can be superior to you as a groom for my daughter? You are a reservoir of all the qualities. Shri resides on your body and never leaves you. O bull among the Satvatas! However, we have already taken a pledge to test the valour of the men who desire to be a possible groom for my daughter. O brave one! These seven bulls are impossible to restrain and impossible to control. They have broken and shattered the limbs of an extremely large number of princes. O descendant of the Yadu lineage! O Shri’s lord! If you control them, you will become the sanctioned groom for my daughter.” Hearing about the vow, the lord girded his loins. He divided himself into seven parts. As if he was play-

ing, he controlled them. With their pride shattered and their energy gone, Shouri tied them up with ropes. As if playing, he tied and dragged them along, like a child does with a wooden figure. [509] Amazed and delighted, the king bestowed his daughter on Krishna. Following the prescribed rites, the illustrious lord accepted her. The king's wife was extremely delighted that her daughter had obtained Krishna as her beloved husband. There were great festivities. Conch shells, drums and trumpets were sounded. There was singing and the playing of musical instruments. Brahmanas pronounced benedictions. Happy men and women adorned themselves with excellent garments and garlands. As a wedding gift, the lord [510] gave ten thousand cows, three thousand maidens attired with excellent garments and with golden necklaces [511] around their necks, nine thousand elephants, chariots that were one hundred times the number of elephants, horses that were one hundred times the number of chariots and male servants who were one hundred times the number of horses. The lord of Kosala made the couple ascend a chariot, surrounded by a large army. His heart melting with affection, he sent them on their way. The valour of those extremely intolerant kings had been shattered by the bulls among the Yadus earlier. Nevertheless, hearing that the maiden was being taken away, they obstructed the path. They showered down torrents of arrows. However, desiring to bring pleasure to his friend, Arjuna used his Gandiva to drive them away, just as a lion drives away inferior animals. Devaki's illustrious son accepted the gifts and went to Dvaraka with Satya. The bull among the Yadus found happiness there.

'Krishna married Bhadra from Kekaya, the daughter of his father's sister, Shrutakirti, when her brothers, Santardana and others, bestowed her on him. [512] Lakshmana, the daughter of the king of Madra, possessed all the auspicious signs. Like Suparna [513] taking away the nectar, he single-handedly took her away from her svayamvara ceremony. Krishna had thousands of many other wives. They were beautiful to behold. Bhouma had imprisoned them. But he killed him and rescued them.' [514]

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The king asked, 'How did the illustrious one kill Bhouma, who had imprisoned those women? Tell me about this brave act of the wielder of the Sharnga bow.'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'He stole his umbrella. He stole the earrings of his relative. He took away his place from the mountain of the immortals. He was informed by Indra about all of Bhouma's deeds. [515] With his wife, he mounted Garuda and went to Pragjyotishapura, which had fortifications made out of mountains, weapons, water, fire and wind. There were terrible and firm obstructions fashioned by Mura. [516] He used his club to shatter the fortifications made of mountains and his arrows to shatter those made out of weapons. He used his chakra to sever the fortifications made out of fire, water and wind. He used his sword to sever Mura's nooses. He shattered the machines with the blare of his conch shell and also the hearts of those spirited ones. The wielder of the mace used his heavy mace to shatter the ramparts. The sound of Panchajanya [517] was like the terrible clap of thunder at the end of a yuga. Hearing this, the five-headed daitya Mura, who was asleep in the waters, arose. He raised a trident and was impossible to look at. His terrible radiance was like that of the sun or the fire at the end of a yuga. With his five mouths, he seemed to devour the three worlds. Like a serpent, he descended and attacked Tarkshya's son. [518] He roared with his five mouths. He whirled the trident and forcefully hurled it towards Garuda. The loud roar filled earth, heaven, the space in between, all the directions and the sky and filled the space inside the cosmic egg. As the trident descended towards Garuda, Hari used two powerful arrows to splinter it into three fragments and struck him in the face with arrows. At this, he [519] angrily released a club towards him. As the club descended towards him in the battle, Gada's elder brother used his own mace to shatter it into one thousand fragments. As he rushed towards him with upraised arms, the unvanquished one playfully used his chakra to slice off his head. Devoid of life, he fell down in the water, like a mountain whose summit has been severed by Indra's energy. His seven sons were distressed at their father's death. Filled with rage, they exerted themselves to exact revenge. Urged by

Bhouma, they emerged, wielding weapons—Tamra, Antariksha, Shravana, Vibhavasu, Vasu, Nabhasvan and Aruna as the seventh. In the battle, they placed Pitha, the commander, at the forefront. Fierce and angry, they used arrows, swords, clubs, spears, double-edged swords and javelins against the unvanquished one. However, the illustrious one was invincible in his valour and used his own arrows to shatter that mountain of weapons into fragments that were as small as sesamum. He severed the heads, thighs, arms, legs and armour and dispatched them, with Pitha as the foremost, to Yama's eternal abode. His own army was thus repulsed by Achuyta's chakra and arrows. On seeing this, Naraka, the earth's son, became intolerant. He emerged on elephants, originating in the ocean of milk, exuding musth. [520] He saw Krishna seated astride Garuda, along with his wife, resembling a cloud tinged with lightning above the sun. He hurled a *shataghni* towards him. [521] All the warriors also struck him simultaneously. Gada's illustrious elder brother used sharp arrows whetted on stone, with colourful feathers. He severed the arms, thighs, heads, necks and bodies of Bhouma's soldiers. At the same time, he killed the horses and the elephants. O extender of the Kuru lineage! Whenever a warrior used a *shastra* or an *astra* [522] against him, Hari used one sharp arrow to splinter it into three fragments. He was astride Suparna, who used his wings to strike at the elephants. Garuda used his beak, wings and talons to slaughter the elephants. Suffering in the battle, Naraka continued to fight, but entered his city. He saw that his own soldiers were routed and made to suffer by Garuda. Bhouma struck him with a javelin that had once repulsed the vajra. But though pierced by it, he did not waver, like an elephant struck by a garland. Frustrated in his efforts, Bhouma, seated on an elephant, seized a javelin, so as to kill Achyuta. However, before he could release it, Hari used his chakra, sharp at the edges, to sever his head. With earrings, a beautiful diadem and ornaments, it blazed as it fell down on the ground. "Alas! This is excellent!" exclaimed the rishis. The lords of the gods showered down flowers on Mukunda and worshipped him.

'The earth approached Krishna and presented the radiant earrings to him. They were made out of molten gold and were studded with jewels. She

gave him a vaijayanti garland and a garland made out of wild flowers. She gave him the umbrella belonging to Prachetas and the great jewel. [523] O king! The goddess praised the lord of the universe, worshipped by the supreme among the gods. With her mind full of devotion, she bowed down, her hands joined in salutation. The earth said, "O lord of the gods! I bow down before you. O wielder of the conch shell, the chakra and the mace! O one who assumes forms that devotees desire! O paramatman! I bow down before you. I bow down to the one who has a lotus in his navel. I bow down to the one who wears a garland of lotus flowers. I bow down to the one whose eyes are like lotuses. I bow down to the one whose feet bear the marks of lotuses! [524] O illustrious Vasudeva Vishnu! I bow down to you. I bow down to Purusha, the original seed. I bow down to the one who is complete in his understanding. O one without birth! O one who gives birth! O brahman! O one who is infinite in powers! O atman of the superior and the inferior! O one who exists in the atmans of all beings! O paramatman! I bow down before you. O unborn lord! When you wish to create, you assume the powerful form of rajas. [525] For destroying and withdrawing, you assume the form of tamas. [526] O lord of the universe! For the preservation of the universe, you resort to sattva. [527] You are time, Pradhana [528] and Purusha, but you are also distinct from them. You are the illustrious one who is without a second. I, water, fire, wind, space, the *tanmatra*s, [529] the gods, the mind, the senses, ahamkara, Mahat and all these mobile and immobile objects are only illusions. His son [530] is approaching your lotus feet. He is terrified. You are the refuge of those who are afflicted. Show him your favours. You should protect him. Place your lotus hand on his hand and cleanse him of all his sins." Humble and full of devotion, the earth entreated him in these words. Granting her freedom from fear, he entered Bhouma's residence, which was filled with all kinds of prosperity.

'Hari saw sixteen thousand princesses there. Using his valour, Bhouma had abducted them from kings. When they saw that noble man enter, those women were captivated. In their minds, they accepted him as their husband, brought there by destiny. Each one of them separately set their hearts on Krishna. "May he be my husband. May the creator sanction this." He had

them attired in clean and sparkling garments and sent them to Dvaravati on vehicles borne by men. [531] He also sent a large treasure consisting of chariots, horses and immense wealth. Keshava also sent sixty-four white elephants. They were spirited and four-tusked, born in Airavata's lineage. He went to the abode of Indra of the gods and returned Aditi's earrings to her. He was affectionately worshipped by Indra of the gods and his beloved and great Indrani. [532] Urged by his wife, [533] he uprooted Parijata and placed it on Garuda. Having defeated Indra and the gods, he took it to his city. He placed it in the garden in Satyabhama's house and it beautified the place. Greedy for its fragrance and intoxicating honey, bees followed it all the way from heaven. He [534] touched Achyuta's feet so that his objective could be accomplished, bowing down with the tips of his crown and entreating him. However, after his task had been accomplished, he slighted the great one. Such is the darkness the gods are in. Shame on their opulence. At the same muhurta, the illustrious and undecaying one simultaneously assumed different forms and married those women in different mansions. Those houses had no parallel and were superior to all others. The one whose deeds are inconceivable remained in those houses. [535] Completely satisfied in his own bliss, he enjoyed himself with those women, like an ordinary householder engaged in his tasks. Those women obtained Rama's consort as their husband, even though Brahma and the others do not know about his course. They happily enjoyed themselves, their love constantly increasing. Every engagement with him was like a new one and they exchanged smiling glances and bashful speech. Though each of them possessed hundreds of maidservants, they themselves undertook to serve the lord. They approached him. Offering him a seat, they worshipped him with excellent objects, washing his feet, offering betel leaves, removing his exhaustion by fanning him, applying fragrances, ornamenting him with garlands, dressing his hair, preparing his bed, bathing him and presenting him with gifts.'

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Shri-Shuka said, ‘On one occasion, the preceptor of the universe was happily lying down on his bed. The princess of Bhishma [536] was serving her husband, while her friends were fanning them. Following his pastimes, the lord who is the creator, preserver and destroyer of the universe was born in the lineage of the Yadus, so as to protect his own ordinances. The inner part of that house was radiant. Strings of pearls hung down. There was a dazzling canopy and the lamps were studded with jewels. There were garlands of jasmine flowers, with the sound of bees buzzing. The sparkling beams of the moon entered through apertures in the lattice work. From the grove, the breeze carried the fragrance of parijata blossoms. O king! The smell of incense and aloe emerged through the holes in the lattice work. Her husband, the lord of the universe, was happily lying down on a bed that was as white as the froth on milk, on an excellent pillow. She was serving him. The fan was made out of yak hair, with a bejewelled handle. The queen took it from her friend’s hand and began to serve the lord by fanning him. As she stood near Achyuta with the whisk in her hand, there was a sound from her bejewelled anklets and her beautiful rings and bangles. The ends of her garment hid her breasts, red and decorated with kunkuma. Wearing her necklace, she looked dazzling. An extremely expensive girdle was wound around her hips. She was Shri personified and he alone was her objective. She had assumed a form that was similar to the form he had assumed in his pastimes. Pleased, he looked at her, with her locks of hair, earrings, a golden necklace around her neck and a delighted and smiling face that was like honey. Hari smiled and spoke to her.

‘The illustrious one said, “O princess! You were desired by kings who were as powerful as the guardians of the worlds. They were great in their powers, prosperous, handsome, generous, strong and energetic. Chedi and the others were smitten by love, impossible to control, and were your suitors. Your brother and your own father wanted to bestow you on them. Ignoring them, why did you choose me? I am not their equal. O one with the excellent brows! Terrified of the kings, we have sought shelter in the ocean. [537] We have engendered an enmity with the strong. We have almost had to

give up the king's seat. O one with the excellent brows! If women follow men whose ways are unclear and who do not follow paths that are usually traversed by men, they generally tend to suffer. We possess nothing. We are always loved by people who possess nothing. O slender-waisted one! That is the reason affluent people do not generally worship me. Marriage and friendship must take place between those who are equal in wealth, birth, prosperity, form and prospects, never between a superior and an inferior. O princess of Vidarbha! You did not know this. You were not far-sighted. You have chosen us, devoid of gunas. [538] We are only praised by confused beggars. [539] Therefore, you should choose a bull among kshatriyas who is similar to you. You will then truly obtain your wishes, in this world and in the next. O one with the beautiful thighs! Kings—Chedi, Shalva, Jarasandha, Dantavakra and others—hate me. So does your elder brother, Rukmi. They were blind because of their valour and intoxication. O fortunate one! I only abducted you to destroy their insolence and arrogance, so as to destroy the energy of the wicked. Indeed, we are indifferent and do not hanker after wives, children and wealth. We are completely satisfied within our own selves and are indifferent towards a body or a home. Like a light, [540] we are not engaged in any action."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'She regarded herself as extremely loved by him, because he was always with her. So as to destroy her pride, the illustrious one said this and stopped. The queen had never heard such disagreeable words from her beloved, who was the lord of all the lords in the three worlds. Hearing this, she was scared. Her heart shuddered and she trembled. Overcome by great anxiety, she started to weep. Her well-formed feet were beautiful, with red nails. She scratched on the ground with these. Tears flowed from her dark eyes, decorated with collyrium, and sprinkled her breasts, red with kunkuma. She stood there, with her face cast downwards. The grief made her words choke. The great misery, fear and sorrow made her lose her mind. The bangles slipped from her hand and the fan fell down. She lost control over her body and her senses were suddenly confounded. With her hair dishevelled, she fell down, like a plantain tree uprooted by the wind. His beloved was bound to him by bonds of love and was unable to

understand the purport of his jesting. Seeing this, the illustrious and merciful Krishna was filled with compassion for her. He swiftly got down from the bed and raised her in his four arms. [541] He gathered up her hair and wiped her face with his lotus hand. The tears of grief had flowed from her eyes and had stained her breasts. He wiped them. O king! She was virtuous and devoted to no one but him. He embraced her in his arms. The lord was compassionate towards those who were distressed. The destination of devotees knew how to comfort people and assured her. She did not understand the purpose of his jesting and did not deserve to suffer in this way.

'The illustrious one said, "O princess of Vidarbha! Do not be displeased with me. I know that you are devoted towards me. O dear one! I jokingly spoke those words with a desire to hear what you would say. I wished to see your loving face, with your lower lip quivering in rage, while you furrowed your beautiful eyebrows and cast sidelong and angry glances at me. O timid one! O beautiful lady! This is the greatest gain for householders in a home, spending time in joking with the beloved."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'O king! Thus, the princess of Vidarbha was consoled by the illustrious one. She understood that the words had been spoken in jest and gave up all fear of her beloved abandoning her. She glanced bashfully towards the face of the illustrious one, bull among men. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Her smile was beautiful and gentle. Rukmini said, "O lotus-eyed one! What you have said is indeed true. You are the illustrious one and I am not your equal in might. You find pleasure in your own greatness. You are the lord of the three lords. [542] I am Prakriti, characterized by gunas. It is the ignorant who grasp my feet. O Urukrama! It is true that you lie down on the ocean, as if you are afraid of the gunas. As atman, you are only awareness. You are always against the wicked aggregation of the senses and are engaged in fighting against them. Your servants give up the status of being kings, rejecting the blinding darkness. [543] Sages enjoy the honey of your lotus feet. Your path is not evident to men who are like animals. It is indeed impossible to comprehend. O lord! The lord's activities are superhuman. Therefore, this must also be true of those who follow you. [544] You possess nothing because there is nothing superior

to you. That is the reason Aja [545] and the others, those who enjoy offerings, bring you their offerings. Those who are satisfied with their bodies and blinded by their affluence do not know you as the Destroyer. You are loved by those who enjoy offerings and they are also loved by you. You are the embodiment of all the objectives of human existence. You are the fruits. Because they are intelligent, those who desire you give up everything else. O lord! They are the right people for you to associate with. This is not like intercourse between a man and a woman, which brings both happiness and misery. Sages who have given up the staff [546] have spoken about your glory. You are the atman of the universe and you give your atman away. [547] That is the reason I have chosen you, rejecting the one born from the lotus, Bhava and the lords in the vault of heaven, not to speak of others. Their hopes are destroyed by the force of time, which is generated from the movement of your eyebrows. O Gada's elder brother! You drove away the kings through the roar of your Sharnga bow, like a lion driving away animals from its own share, and abducted me, your own share. O lord! Therefore, your words that you sought refuge in the ocean because you were scared of them is false. Desiring you, jewels among kings like Anga, Vainya, [548] Jayanti's son, [549] Nahusha's son, [550] Gaya and others gave up their universal sovereignty. O lotus-eyed one! They cast aside their kingdoms and entered the forest. They followed you. Did they suffer in this world? Virtuous ones have described the scent of your lotus feet as something that confers liberation on people. It is Lakshmi's abode. Having smelt these, which mortal woman who knows what is good for herself will ignore you and resort to someone else who always suffers from fear? You are the lord of the universe and I have chosen you because you are appropriate for me. You are my atman and will satisfy my desires in this world and in the next. May the shelter of your feet protect me from wandering around, [551] just as they grant freedom from all that is false to those who approach them and worship you. O Achyuta! O afflicter of enemies! Your glories have been chanted in assembles of Mrida [552] and Virinchi. You mentioned some kings. Let them be servants in the houses of women who have not heard about you and where the servants are asses, cows, dogs and cats. [553] A woman who has not smelt the fragrance of your

lotus feet is confused in her intelligence. She will love and serve a living corpse with skin, whiskers, body hair, nails and filled from the inside with flesh, bones, blood, worms, excrement, phlegm, bile and wind. O lotus-eyed one! May I be devoted to your feet. You are satisfied within yourself and do not glance too much towards me. However, when there is an excessive increase in rajas, you do look at me. [554] That itself is great compassion towards me. O Madhusudana! I do not think that your words are false. Like Amba, unmarried maidens often develop love. [555] Even if she is married, a *pumshchali* [556] always looks for new and newer lovers. An intelligent person should not maintain such a wicked woman. She has deviated in both worlds."

'The illustrious one said, "O virtuous lady! O princess! We deceived you only because we wished to hear you speak. Everything that you have said in reply is true. O beautiful lady! O fortunate one! You are always single-minded in your devotion towards me. Everything that you desire will happen, but you will also obtain freedom from desire. O unblemished one! I have experienced love towards the husband and devotion to the husband. Though I tried to disturb you with my words, your mind was attached to me and did not deviate. I am the lord of emancipation. But confounded by my maya, there are those who perform austerities and observe vows with the objective of obtaining happiness as couples. O proud one! I am the lord of emancipation and I am also the lord of prosperity. But having obtained me, there are unfortunate men who desire prosperity, which can also be obtained in hell. They are addicted to material objects and hell is the most appropriate place for them. It is good fortune that you are the mistress of my household. You are constantly engaged in faithful service towards me and that liberates from the cycle of samsara. The deceitful find this very difficult to accomplish, especially those whose intentions are also wicked. This is an extremely heavy burden to bear for a woman who is deceitful. O proud one! Among all the houses and all the wives, I have not seen such a loving one as you. At the time of your own marriage, there were kings who had arrived. But disregarding them, simply because you had heard true accounts about me, you secretly sent a brahmana to me with a message. Your brother

was defeated and disfigured in the encounter. At the time of the marriage, he was killed during a gambling match. [557] You experienced this intolerable suffering. However, because you were scared of being separated from me, you did not utter a word. We have been conquered by you. To obtain me, you sent a messenger with secret counsel. When I took a long time, you thought that everything was empty. Unwilling to be united with anyone else, you wished to give up your body. We rejoice in this affection and may it always remain with you."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'Thus, the illustrious lord of the universe found his own pleasure with Rama and indulged in this conjugal conversation. He was imitating the conduct in the world of men. Similarly, in the other houses, the lord also behaved like a householder. Hari, the preceptor of the worlds, was engaged in following the dharma of a householder.'

Chapter 10(61)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Each of Krishna's women gave birth to ten sons each. They possessed all his prosperity and in no way were they inferior to their father. The princesses saw that Achyuta was always in their house. Not knowing about his true nature, each of those women thought that she was the most loved by him. They were captivated by his beautiful face, which was like the whorl of a lotus, his large eyes, his long arms, his loving and smiling glances and his attractive conversation. The women tried to conquer the lord's mind with their own allurements, but were incapable of doing so. They cast bashful and smiling glances at him and indicated their desires by arching their eyebrows and sending other strong messages of intercourse. However, though those sixteen thousand wives used such arrows of the god of love, they were incapable of agitating his senses. The women obtained Rama's consort as their husband. Not even Brahma and the others know the means to obtain him. They constantly enjoyed the pleasure of that increased love towards him and his smiling and sidelong glances. Their desire for union with him was always new. Though each possessed hundreds of ser-

vant-maids, they themselves took up the task of serving the lord. They approached him and offered him a seat and other objects of worship. They washed his feet. They offered him betel leaves. They dispelled his exhaustion by fanning him and gave him fragrances and garlands. They dressed his hair, prepared his bed, bathed him and gave him presents. Each of Krishna's wives had ten sons. Earlier, I have mentioned eight queens. I will now recount the names of their sons, Pradyumna and the others. With Pradyumna as the eldest, those born from Rukmini were Charudeshna, Sudeshna, the valiant Charudeha, Sucharu, Charugupta, Bhadracharu, Charuchandra, Vicharu and Charu as the tenth. Not a single one of these sons of Hari was inferior to his father. Satyabhama's ten sons were Bhanu, Subhanu, Svarbhanu, Prabhanu, Bhanuman, Chandrabhanu, Brihadbhanu, Atibhanu as the eighth, Shribhanu and Pratibhanu. Jambavati's sons were Samba, Sumitra, Purujit, Shatajit, Sahasrajit, Vijaya, Chitraketu, Vasuman, Dravida and Kratu. Samba and the others were dear to their father. The sons of Nagnajiti were Vira, Chandra, Ashvasena, Chitragu, Vegavan, Vrisha, Ama, Shanku, Vasu and the prosperous Kunti. The sons of Kalindi were Shruta, Kavivrisha, Vira, Subahu, Bhadra, Ekala, Shanti, Dasha, Purnamasa and Somaka as the youngest. Madra's [558] sons were Praghosha, Gatravan, Simha, Bala, Prabala, Urdhvaga, Mahashakti, Saha, Oja and Aparajita. The sons of Mitravinda were Vrika, Harsha, Anila, Gridhra, Vardhana, Annada, Mahamsha, Pavana, Vahni and Kshudhi. Bhadra's sons were Sangramajit, Brihatsena, Shura, Praharana, Arijit, Jaya, Subhadra, Vama, Ayus and Satyaka. Through Hari, Rohini's sons were Diptiman, Tamratapta and others. O king! When they lived in the city of Bhojakata, through Rukmavati, Rukmi's daughter, Pradyumna had an immensely powerful son named Aniruddha. O king! Sixteen thousand mothers gave birth to those who descended from Krishna and their sons and grandsons numbered hundreds of crores.'

The king asked, 'Rukmi had been defeated by Krishna in an encounter and was waiting for an opportunity to kill him. O learned one! How did he bestow his daughter on his enemy's son? Tell me how two enemies entered into a matrimonial alliance. Yogis can properly see everything in the past,

the present and the future, even if it is beyond the senses and distant and even if it is obstructed from vision.'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'He [559] was the embodiment of Ananga himself and when she chose him at her svayamvara, on a single chariot, he defeated the assembled kings and abducted her. Rukmi remembered the enemy and the disrespect shown by Krishna. However, since he wished to please his sister, he bestowed his daughter on his nephew. O king! Kritavarma's powerful son married Rukmini's large-eyed daughter, Charumati. Rukmi bestowed Rochana, his granddaughter, on his daughter's son, Aniruddha. Despite his being bound in enmity towards Hari, he wished to bring pleasure to his sister. Though he knew this marriage was adharma, he was bound by bonds of affection. [560] O king! At the time of the marriage, Rukmini, Rama, Keshava, Samba, Pradyumna and the others went to the city of Bhojakata.

'When the marriage was over, insolent kings, headed by the king of Kalinga, [561] told Rukmi, "Defeat Bala in a game of dice. O king! Though he does not know how to play with dice, he is extremely addicted to it." Thus addressed, he challenged Bala and a match of gambling with the dice commenced. Rama placed stakes of one hundred, one thousand and ten thousand. [562] Rukmi won them all. Kalinga displayed his teeth and laughed loudly at Bala. The wielder of the plough could not tolerate this. After this, Rukmi placed a bet of one lakh and Bala won this. However, resorting to deceit, Rukmi exclaimed, "I have won." The prosperous one became turbulent with rage, like the ocean on the day of the full moon. His eyes turned red because of his great rage and he placed a bet of ten crores. According to dharma, Rama won this. However, resorting to deceit, Rukmi said, "I have won. Let the referees make their decision." A voice was heard from the firmament, "According to dharma, Bala has won the bet. What Rukmi has spoken is false." Urged on by the wicked kings, the one from Vidarbha did not pay heed to this. Goaded by destiny, he laughed at Samkarshana and said, "You cowherds roam around in the forests. You are not accomplished in playing with the dice. Playing with dice and playing with arrows are for kings, not for the likes of you." Abused by Rukmi and laughed at by the kings, he was enraged. In that assembly of kings, he raised a club and slew

him. The king of Kalinga, who had displayed his teeth and laughed, tried to flee. But he angrily seized him at the tenth step and knocked out his teeth with force. Other kings suffered from Bala's club. Their arms, thighs and heads were crushed and covered with blood. They ran away in fear. O king! Hari was scared that his relationship of love with Rukmini would suffer. Therefore, when his brother-in-law, Rukmi, was killed by Bala, he did not say anything—praising it, or condemning it. Rama and the other Dasharhas placed Aniruddha and his bride on an excellent chariot and went to Kushasthali [563] from Bhojakata. Having sought refuge with Madhusudana, they had accomplished all their objectives.'

Chapter 10(62)

The king said, 'O great yogi! The best of the Yadus [564] married Bana's daughter, Usha. As a result, there was a terrible battle between Hari and Shankara. You should tell me everything about this.'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'The great-souled Bali, who had given the earth to Hari in his form as a dwarf, had one hundred sons and Bana was the eldest. His [565] biological son was Bana and he was always devoted to Shiva. The intelligent one was revered and generous. He was firm in his vows and did not waver from the truth. Earlier, he used to rule over his kingdom from the beautiful city known as Shonita. Because of Shambhu's favours, the immortals behaved as if they were his servants. When Mrida engaged in his *tandava* dance, he pleased him by using his own one thousand arms to play on musical instruments. The illustrious lord of all creatures is one who should be worshipped. He was devoted towards his devotees and asked him to choose a boon. He requested him to be the lord of the city. He became intoxicated with his valour. On one occasion, Girisha was standing next to him. He touched his lotus feet with his diadem, which had the complexion of the sun. He said, "O Mahadeva! I bow down to you. You are the lord and preceptor of the worlds. You are like the tree from heaven that satisfies all the unfulfilled desires of men. The one thousand arms you have given me

have become a great burden. Other than you, I do not find anyone in the three worlds that I can fight with. O original being! My arms were itching to have a fight. I advanced against the elephants who are the guardians of the directions, pulverizing mountains with my arms. However, they were terrified and fled." Hearing this, the illustrious one became angry. "O foolish one! When you fight against someone who is my equal, your standard will be shattered. That is when your insolence will be broken." Thus addressed, because of his wicked intelligence, he was delighted and entered his own residence. Evil in his intelligence, he waited for Girisha's instructions, so that his own valour might be destroyed.

'He had a daughter named Usha. In a dream, she had intercourse with Pradyumna. The maiden obtained him as his beloved, though she had never seen him or heard of him. Unable to see him, [566] she arose in the midst of her friends and exclaimed, "O beloved! Where are you?" At this, she was disturbed and greatly ashamed. Bana's minister was Kumbhanda and his daughter, Chitralekha, was her friend. Filled with curiosity, she asked her friend, Usha. "O one with the excellent brows! Whom are you searching for? What is this wish of yours? O princess! I have not yet seen anyone accept your hand." Usha replied, "I saw a man in my dream. He was lotus-eyed and dark in complexion. His arms were long and he was attired in yellow garments. He was one who touches the hearts of women. He is the beloved one I am searching for. Having made me drink the nectar of his lips, he has gone somewhere. I am craving after him. He has abandoned me in this ocean of misery." Chitralekha said, "I will dispel your misery. As long as he exists anywhere in the three worlds, I will bring your groom to you. Please indicate the one who has stolen your heart." Having said this, she drew portraits of gods, gandharvas, Siddhas, charanas, serpents, daityas, vidyadharas, *yaksha*s and men. Among men, she drew portraits of Vrishnis, Shura, Anakadundubhi, Rama and Krishna. On seeing Pradyumna, she was ashamed. [567] O lord of the earth! Seeing Aniruddha's portrait, she cast her face downwards in shame. She smiled and said, "This is he. It is him." Chitralekha was a *yogini* and recognized him as Krishna's grandson. O king! Travelling through the sky, she went to Dvaraka, protected by Krishna.

Pradyumna's son was sleeping on an excellent couch. Using powers of yoga, she seized him. She took him to Shonitapura and showed her friend her beloved. Seeing that most handsome of men, her face filled with joy. She took Pradyumna's son to her own house, which was impossible for men to see. There, she enjoyed herself with him. She served and worshipped him with extremely expensive garments, garlands, fragrances, incense, lamps, seats, other objects, drinks, food, other eatables and pleasant words. He was secreted in the maiden's house and his affection towards her constantly increased. Since his senses were overwhelmed by the enjoyment, he did not realize the number of days that had passed.

'As she enjoyed herself happily with the brave Yadu, her vow was broken. [568] It was impossible to conceal the signs. The female servants went and said, "O king! We have noticed signs of behaviour in your daughter that will taint the lineage. O lord! She has been guarded by us in the house and she couldn't be approached. It was impossible for men to see her. We do not understand how your daughter could have been polluted." Hearing about his maiden being polluted, Bana was distressed. He swiftly went to his daughter's room. There, he saw the supreme one of the Yadu lineage. He was Kama's [569] son and the most beautiful person on earth. He was dark in complexion and his garment was yellow. His eyes were like lotuses. His arms were long and his earrings and locks of hair made his face beautiful. His glances were full of smiles. He sat there, in front of his beloved and auspicious daughter, playing with dice. Since it was spring, a garland of jasmine flowers hung between his arms and because he had embraced his beloved, it was smeared with kunkuma from her breasts. Seeing this, he [570] was amazed. Madhava saw him enter, surrounded by several soldiers who were like assassins. He raised an iron club and stood there, like the Destroyer [571] wielding his rod, ready to strike. As they approached and surrounded him, desiring to seize him, he struck, like a leader of boars at dogs. Struck by him, their heads, thighs and arms were shattered and they left the residence and fled. When he struck and killed his own soldiers, Bali's powerful son became angry and tied him in bonds made out of serpents. [572] When she

heard about his bondage, Usha was overwhelmed with great grief and misery. Tears flowed from her eyes.'

Chapter 10(63)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The four months of the rainy season passed. Aniruddha's relatives could not see him and grieved. The Vrishnis, for whom Krishna was a divinity, heard from Narada about what he had done and his bondage. They went to Shonitapura. Assembling twelve akshouhinis, the bulls among the Satvatas laid siege to Bana's city from all directions. They were Pradyumna, Yuyudhana, Gada, Samba, Sarana, Nanda, Upananda, Bhadra and others—all Rama and Krishna's followers. The groves, ramparts, mansions and arches of the city were shattered. Seeing this, he [573] became angry and emerged with an army that was equally large. For Bana's sake, along with his son, [574] Shiva surrounded him with *pramatha*s. [575] Astride the bull Nandi, he fought with Rama and Krishna. O king! There was a tumultuous encounter that made the body hair stand up, between Krishna and Shankara and between Pradyumna and Guha. [576] Bala fought with Kumbhanda and Kupakarna, Samba with Bana's son and Satyaki with Bana. On their vimanas, Brahma and the other lords among the gods, sages, Siddhas, charanas, gandharvas, apsaras and yakshas arrived to witness it. With sharp-tipped arrows shot from his Sharnga bow, Shouri drove away Shankara's followers—bhutas, pramathas, guhyakas, *dakini*s, *yatudhana*s, *vetala*s, *vinayaka*s, pretas, *matri*s, pishachas, *kushmanda*s and *brahma-rakshasa*s. The wielder of the Pinaka used many different kinds of weapons against the wielder of Sharnga. Without being surprised at all, with the Sharnga bow in his hand, he pacified all these with counter-weapons. He countered *brahmastra* with brahmastra, *vayavyastra* with *parvatastra, agneyastra* with *parjanyastra* and *pashupata* with his own weapon. [577] Using *jrimbhanastra,* he confounded Girisha by making him yawn. Shouri used swords, a club and arrows to kill Bana's soldiers. From every direction, Skanda was struck by Pradyum-

na's showers of weapons. With blood flowing from his limbs, astride the peacock, he fled from the battle. Kumbhanda and Kupakarna suffered from the club [578] and fell down. With these leaders slain, the soldiers fled in different directions. Seeing that his own army had been routed, Bana was filled with great intolerance. He abandoned his duel with Satyaki, and on his chariot, attacked Krishna in the battle. Indomitable in the battle, Bana simultaneously drew back the strings on five thousand bows and on each string, affixed two arrows. [579] The illustrious Hari simultaneously severed all these arrows and killing the charioteer and horses and destroying the chariot, blew on his conch shell. His mother was named Kotara. Wishing to save her son's life, she appeared before Krishna, naked, and with her hair loose. [580] Gada's elder brother turned his face away, so that he would not have to look at the naked one. At that time, devoid of his chariot and with his bow severed, Bana entered the city. When the large number of bhutas had run away, Jvara [581] attacked Dasharha. He possessed three heads and three feet and seemed to burn down the ten directions. Seeing this, the god Narayana released his own Jvara. The two Jvaras, Maheshvara and Vaishnava, fought against each other. Suffering from Vaishnava's strength, Maheshvara started to cry. Maheshvara Jvara was frightened and could not find freedom from fear anywhere else. Therefore, he sought refuge with Hrishikesha. He joined his hands in salutation and praised him.

'Jvara said, "I bow down before you. You are infinite in your powers. You are the supreme lord. You are in all atmans. You are pure consciousness and absolute. You are the cause behind the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe. You are the brahman. You are the signs of the brahman. You are serene. You are time, destiny, karma, *jivatman*, [582] nature, objects, kshetra, *prana*, [583] atman and transformations. You are the seed that leads to the constant interaction between these. It is your maya and I seek refuge with you to counter that maya. In many forms, you indulge in pastimes to protect the gods, virtuous people and the ordinances of the worlds. You kill those who deviate from the path and subsist through violence. This birth of yours is for the sake of removing the earth's burden. I am scorched by your energy, which is impossible to withstand. This Jvara is extremely

fierce in its energy and is extremely cold. As long as they do not serve at the soles of your feet and as long as they are bound to desire, embodied creatures are tormented by it."

'The illustrious one replied, "O three-headed one! I am pleased with you. Let the fever on account of my Jvara go away. If a person remembers this conversation, may he not suffer fear on account of this."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'Thus addressed, Maheshvara Jvara took Achyuta's permission and left. However, astride his chariot, Bana advanced against Janardana. The asura wielded many kinds of weapons in his one thousand arms. O king! Extremely angry, he released arrows at the one who wields the chakra as a weapon. He repeatedly hurled weapons at him. The illustrious one used his chakra, sharp at the edges, to lop off his arms, as if they were the branches of a tree. When Bana's arms were being severed, the illustrious Bhava was filled with compassion towards his devotee. Approaching the one who wields the chakra as a weapon, he spoke to him.

'The illustrious Rudra said, "You are the brahman. You are the supreme illumination. You are concealed in words about the brahman. [584] You are as unpolluted as the sky and those with spotless atmans can see you. The sky is your navel. The fire is your mouth. The water is your semen. The firmament is your head. The directions are your ears. Your feet are the earth. The moon is your mind. Your eyes are the sun. I am your ahamkara. The ocean is your stomach. Your arms are Indra. The herbs and plants are your body hair. The clouds are your hair. Virinchi is your intelligence. Prajapati is your genital organ. Dharma is your heart. You are Purusha, the creator of the worlds. O one who is infinite in powers! For the welfare of the universe, you have assumed this avatara to protect dharma. All of us are dependent on you and maintain the seven worlds. You alone are the original being. You are without a second. You are transcendental and self-manifesting. You are without cause, but you are the lord behind all causes. Nevertheless, you can be perceived through the transformations. You use your own maya for the manifestation of all the gunas. When covered under its own shadow, [585] the sun illuminates its own shadow and all the forms. In that way, your attributes are hidden behind the gunas. O lord! But you are like a lamp to

those who possess those gunas. Your maya confounds and causes immersion in sons, wives, homes and other things. Thus attached, they are immersed in this ocean of misery, rise up and are submerged again. A man obtains birth in this world of men through the god's favours. However, if he does not conquer his senses and does not honour his feet, one should grieve over him. He is deceiving himself. For the sake of the objects of the senses, which are calamities, if a mortal person abandons you, the beloved lord who is his own atman, he gives up amrita for the sake of poison. You are the lord who is most loved by our atmans. I, Brahma, the gods and sages who are pure in their consciousness have sought refuge in you with all our souls. You are the reason behind the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe. You are impartial and tranquil. You are our well-wisher and divinity. You are unique and without a second. The universe is in your atman. We worship this god for the sake of liberation from samsara. This one [586] is loved by me and follows me. O god! I have bestowed freedom from fear on him. Through your favours, let that be granted to him, just as the lord of the daityas [587] obtained your favours."

'The illustrious one replied, "O illustrious one! I will do what you have said and give you pleasure. We will act accordingly. I find this virtuous and approve of it. This asura, the son of Virochana's son, will not be killed by me. I granted Prahlada the boon that I would not kill any of his descendants. I lopped off his arms so that I could destroy his insolence. His large army has been killed because it was a burden on earth. Four arms still remain and he will be immortal, without suffering from old age. This asura will be the foremost among your attendants and will not suffer from fear from any source."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'Having thus obtained freedom from fear from Krishna, the asura bowed his head down. He placed Pradyumna's son and his bride on a chariot and brought them there. Taking Rudra's leave, he departed, placing him and his wife, in front, with excellent garments and ornaments. They were surrounded by an akshouhini. He entered his own capital, which was ornamented with flags and arches. The roads and quadrangles were sprinkled with water. There were the sounds of conch shells, drums

and kettledrums. He was welcomed by citizens, well-wishers and brahmanas. Thus did Krishna triumph over Shankara in the encounter. If a person wakes up and remembers it, he is never defeated.'

Chapter 10(64)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O king! On one occasion, Samba, Pradyumna, Charu, Bhanu, Gada and other young ones from the Yadu lineage went to a grove to amuse themselves. After playing there for a very long time, they became thirsty. They searched around for water and found a well without any water in it. They saw an extraordinary creature there. It was a lizard that was as large as a mountain. On seeing it, their minds were astonished. Full of compassion, they made great efforts to raise it up. It had fallen down there. The boys tied it up with leather thongs and ropes. However, they were unable to raise it. Anxious, they went and told Krishna about this. The illustrious lotus-eyed creator of the universe went there and saw it. Effortlessly, he used his left hand to raise it up. Touched by Uttamashloka's hand, it immediately abandoned its form as a lizard. His beautiful complexion was like that of molten gold. His amazing form was like that of a resident of heaven, with ornaments, garments and garlands. Though he knew, with a view to making it known among people, Mukunda questioned him. "O immensely fortunate one! Who are you? Your form is excellent. Indeed, I must count you as a supreme among the gods. What karma reduced you to this state? O extremely fortunate one! You do not seem to deserve it. We are eager to know. Tell us about yourself. If you think it to be appropriate, tell us." The king was thus asked by Krishna, who has an infinite number of forms. Wearing a diadem that was as radiant as the sun, he bowed down before Madhava.

'Nriga replied, "O lord! I am a king among men, named Nriga. I am descended from the lineage of Ikshvaku. When the list of generous ones is recounted, it is possible that you may have heard of me. O protector! There is nothing that is not known to you. You are the witness in the atmans of all creatures. Your vision is not affected by time. Nevertheless, because of your

command, I will speak. In charity, I gave away as many cows as there are grains of sand on earth, as many stars as there are in the firmament and as many drops of rain as there are in showers. They yielded milk and were young. They were excellent in conduct and form. They were full of attributes. They were brown and their horns were encrusted in gold. They had been obtained in the proper way. [588] Their hooves were plated with silver and they were with their calves. They were covered with garments, garlands and ornaments and I gave them away. I gave them to young bulls among brahmanas who had ornamented themselves with their qualities and good conduct. They were from families that were suffering. They were devoted to truth and the vows. They were known for their austerities, learning, knowledge about the brahman and virtue. I gave them cows, land, gold, houses, horses, elephants, maidens, [589] female servants, sesamum, silver, beds, garments, jewels, furnishings and chariots. I performed rites, sacrifices and auspicious works. There was a cow that belonged to a foremost brahmana. It got lost and entered my own herd of cattle, getting mixed up in the process. Not knowing about this, I gave it to a different brahmana. Seeing it being taken away, its owner spoke these words. 'This belongs to me.' The one who had received it said, 'This belongs to me. It was given to me by Nriga.' The two brahmanas debated in this way. Seeking to accomplish their own respective objectives, they came and spoke to me. 'You gave it to me.' 'You took it away from me.' Hearing them, I was filled with confusion. Because of dharma, I faced a difficult situation and entreated both the brahmanas. 'In exchange for this cow, I will give one hundred thousand excellent cows. You should show me your favours. I am your servant and have done this unwittingly. Please save me from this calamity. Otherwise, I will descend into an impure hell.' The owner said, 'O king! I do not want that.' Saying this, he left. The other one said, 'I do not desire ten thousand cows in exchange for this cow.' Saying this, he too left. O god of the gods! O lord of the universe! At this time, Yama's messengers arrived and conveyed me to Yama's eternal abode, where Yama questioned me. 'O king! Do you first want to experience the consequence of your wicked deed, or the consequence of your good deeds? I do not see any end to the generous deeds of

dharma you have performed. You have obtained radiant worlds.' I replied, 'O god! I first want to experience the consequences of my wicked deed.' He said, 'Then, fall.' O lord! I saw myself fall down and I have become this lizard. O Keshava! I was generous and I was devoted to brahmanas. I am your servant. Since I have always desired to meet you, my memory has still not been extinguished. O lord! O paramatman! How is it that you are yourself before my eyes now? O Adhokshaja! I am blind in my intelligence and am suffering severely from this hardship. You are perceived by lords of yoga who meditate in their hearts, using the unblemished insight of the sacred texts. You are the one who liberates from the cycle of samsara. Perhaps that is the reason you have shown yourself to me. O god of the gods! O protector of the universe! O Purushottama! O Narayana! O Hrishikesha! O one of auspicious fame! O Achyuta! O undecaying one! O Krishna! O lord! Give me leave to return to my state as a god. Wherever I may be, may you remain in my consciousness and may I seek shelter at your feet. I bow down before the source of all creation. O brahman! O one who is infinite in powers! O Krishna! O Vasudeva! O lord of yoga! I bow down before you."'

Shri-Shuka said, 'Saying this, he circumambulated him, touching his feet with his diadem. Having taken his permission, while all the men looked on, he mounted his vimana. The illustrious Krishna, Devaki's son, spoke to his own people. He regarded brahmanas as divinities and possessed dharma in his soul. He wished to instruct those born in royal lineages. "Indeed, the property of a brahmana, however little, is as difficult to digest as a fire that has been consumed. In fact, it is more powerful. What need be said about kings who pride themselves on being lords? I do not think that *halahala* is a poison, since it has an antidote. [590] It has been said that the property of a brahmana is a poison for which there is no antidote on earth. If a brahmana's property is used without his permission, it ruins three generations. However, if it is seized and enjoyed by force, it destroys ten generations of ancestors and ten generations of successors. Kings are blinded by the prosperity of their kingdom and do not see their own downfall. Foolish, they regard it as virtuous to take a brahmana's property and head for hell. If a king from a royal lineage loses control and takes away the means of subsistence

of a generous brahmana with a family, he takes away the brahmana's share, which is then stained with the tears of weeping. He is then cooked in *kumbhipaka* for as many years as there are particles of dust. [591] Whether it has been given to him by the brahmana himself or whether it has been given by someone else, if a person takes away his property, for sixty thousand years, he is born as a worm in excrement. May a brahmana's wealth never come to me. Men who hanker after it are limited in their lifespans. They are defeated and dislodged from their kingdoms. They become snakes that cause anxiety. O those who are my own! Do not injure a brahmana, even if he has caused offence. Even if he strikes you a lot and curses you, always bow down before him. I control myself and always bow down before brahmanas. You should always bow down in a similar way. Otherwise, you will face punishment from me. Even if a brahmana's possession has been taken away ignorantly, the taker will fall downwards, just as it was with Nriga, who took away the brahmana's cow." In this way, the illustrious Mukunda made the residents of Dvaraka listen. The purifier of all the worlds then entered his own residence.'

Chapter 10(65)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O best among the Kuru lineage! The illustrious Balabhadra [592] mounted his chariot. Eager to see his well-wishers, he went to Nanda's Gokula. The gopas and gopis had been anxious for a very long time and they embraced him. Rama greeted his parents. [593] They welcomed him and pronounced their benedictions over him. "O Dasharha! May you and your younger brother, the lord of the universe, protect us for a very long time." Saying this, they placed him on their laps and embraced him, their eyes wet with tears. In the proper way, according to age, friendship and the relationship with himself, he bowed down before the elders among the gopas and those who were younger bowed down to him. He then went to the cowherds and smilingly clasped their hands. After he had rested and was happily seated, they surrounded him and questioned him. In words that

faltered because of their affection, they asked about the welfare of their relatives. They had given up everything they possessed for the sake of the lotus-eyed Krishna. "O Rama! Are all our relatives well? O Rama! With your wives and sons, do you still remember us? It is good fortune that the wicked Kamsa has been killed. It is good fortune that our well-wishers have been freed. It is good fortune that they have killed and vanquished their enemies and have found shelter inside a fortification." The gopis approached Rama and welcomed him, questioning him with smiles. "Is Krishna, the darling of the women of the city, happy? Does he remember his relatives and his father and his mother? Do you think he himself will come back and see his mother even once? Does the mighty-armed one remember the service we rendered him? O Dasharha! O lord! For his sake, we abandoned our mothers, fathers, brothers, husbands, sons and sisters. These are extremely difficult to give up. He is ungrateful. How can the intelligent women of the city accept the words of someone who is so fickle? Perhaps they accept them because his words are colourful and charming. Perhaps they are agitated by his smiling glances and desire is ignited in them. O gopis! Why are we talking about him? Let us talk about something else. If he spends his time without us, we should also behave in a similar way." But the women remembered Shouri's smiles, conversation, beautiful glances, gait and loving embraces. They started to weep. The illustrious Samkarshna was accomplished in comforting. He assured them by conveying Krishna's message and calmed their minds.

'The illustrious Rama resided there for the two months of Madhu and Madhava. [594] During the nights, he brought the gopis the pleasure of intercourse. Surrounded by large numbers of women, Rama frequented a grove on the banks of the Yamuna. It was bathed by the beams of the full moon and the breeze bore the fragrance of night lotuses. Sent by Varuna, the goddess Varuni [595] emerged from the hollow of a tree. She flowed everywhere in that forest and made it more fragrant with her own aroma. The wind conveyed the smell of that flow of honey to Bala. He inhaled it and approached. Together, he and the women drank it. As the women sang about his conduct, the wielder of the plough roamed around in the forests with them. In-

toxicated by the liquor, his eyes started to roll. He wore a garland and a single earring, with the vaijayanti garland. His smiling lotus face was radiant, decorated with beads of perspiration. Inebriated, the lord wanted to sport in the water and summoned Yamuna there. In the state of intoxication, he took it that the river had slighted his words. Since it had not come, he became angry. He used the tip of his plough to drag it there. "O wicked one! You have shown me disrespect. You go where you want. Though I have summoned you, you have not come here. Therefore, with the tip of my plough, I will fetch one hundred of your flows here." Thus censured by the descendant of the Yadu lineage, Yamuna was terrified. O king! She fell down at his feet. She trembled and spoke these words. "O Rama! O mighty-armed one! O Rama! I did not know about your valour. O lord of the universe! With only one of your portions, [596] you hold up the universe. O illustrious one! I did not know about your supreme powers. O atman of the universe! You are compassionate towards your devotees. O illustrious one! I have sought refuge with you. You should free me." Asked in this way, the illustrious Bala released Yamuna. With the women, he entered the water, like a king of elephant with female elephants. As he wished, he sported in the waters. When he emerged, Kanti gave him two blue garments, extremely expensive garments and a sparkling garland. [597] He attired himself in those blue garments and adorned himself with the golden garlands. With those excellent ornaments and pastes, he was radiant, like the great Indra's elephant. O king! Even today, the course of the Yamuna being dragged away by the infinitely valiant Bala can be seen, indicating his valour. Rama's mind was agitated by the sweetness of the women of Vraja. Therefore, as he sported in Vraja, all those nights seemed to be like a single night.'

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Shri-Shuka said, 'O king! When Rama had gone to Nanda's Vraja, the ignorant lord of Karusha thought, "I am Vasudeva." [598] Accordingly, he sent a messenger to Krishna. He was flattered by foolish people. "You are the il-

lustrious Vasudeva. You are the lord of the universe who has descended." Therefore, he took himself to be Achyuta. The foolish and ignorant one was like a king chosen by children. [599] The evil-minded one sent a messenger to Krishna, whose paths are inconceivable, in Dvaraka. Arriving in Dvaraka, the messenger went to the lord Krishna when he was in his assembly hall. He conveyed the king's message to the lotus-eyed one and said, "I alone am the Vasudeva who has descended for the sake of showing compassion to beings. There is no other. Therefore, give up your false title. O Satvata! It is out of confusion that you sport my signs. [600] Abandon them and seek refuge with me. Alternatively, fight with me." Hearing the boasting of Poundraka, limited in his intelligence, Ugrasena and the others in the assembly laughed loudly. After the jocular conversation, the illustrious one spoke to the messenger. "O foolish one! Just as you have boasted, I will hurl those signs away. [601] O ignorant one! When you are killed and lie down, your mouth will be shut and you will be surrounded by kites and vultures. Dogs will find a refuge in you." The messenger conveyed all this abuse to his lord.

'Krishna mounted his chariot and went to Kashi. [602] Maharatha Poundraka noticed his efforts and quickly emerged from the city, along with two akshouhinis. O king! His friend, the king of Kashi, followed him, guarding his rear with three akshouhinis. Hari saw Poundraka bearing the signs—conch shell, sword, mace, Sharnga bow, shrivatsa mark, Koustubha jewel, garland of wild flowers, yellow silken garments, Garuda on the standard, expensive diadem and ornaments and shining earrings shaped like makaras. [603] Hari saw him in that artificial attire, an exact imitation of his own, just like an actor on a stage, and laughed loudly. Hari's enemies attacked him with spears, clubs, bludgeons, javelins, double-edged swords, spikes, lances, swords, battleaxes and arrows. The armies of Poundraka and the king of Kashi had elephants, chariots, horses and foot soldiers and Krishna severely afflicted them with his mace, sword, chakra and arrows, like the fire of destruction separately afflicts subjects at the end of a yuga. His chakra severed and littered the field of battle with chariots, horses, elephants, bipeds, donkeys and camels. This brought pleasure to the hearts of the spirited. It resembled the terrible pleasure ground of the lord of bhutas. [604] Shouri spoke

to Poundraka. “O Poundraka! You used your messenger’s words to speak to me about weapons. I will now release them towards you. O ignorant one! Give up my title, which you have assumed falsely. If I do not wish to fight against you, I will certainly seek refuge with you today.” Having abused him in this way, he used his sharp arrows to deprive Poundraka of his chariot. Using his chakra, he severed his head, like Indra using his vajra to slice off the peak of a mountain. In similar fashion, he used his arrows to sever the head of the king of Kashi and, as if it was a lotus bud borne by the wind, made it fall inside the city of Kashi. Having thus killed the ones who were jealous of him, Poundraka and his friend, Hari entered Dvaraka. The Siddhas chanted about his immortal accounts. O king! By always thinking about the illustrious one, he [605] severed all his bonds. By assuming Hari’s form, he himself became immersed in him.

‘The head, decorated with earrings, fell down at the gate of the palace. Bewildered, people asked, “What is this? Whom does this head belong to?” O king! The queens, sons and relatives recognized that it belonged to the king, the lord of Kashi. Along with the citizens, they lamented and wept, “Alas! Our protector has been killed.” His son, Sudakshina, performed the funeral rites for his father. “I will slay my father’s slayer and exact vengeance for my father.” Having made up his mind in this way, accompanied by his priest, he worshipped Maheshvara, performing supreme meditation. The illustrious lord, the granter of boons, was pleased and appeared in Avimukta. [606] As a boon, he asked, “I wish for a means so that my father’s killer can be slain.” “Along with brahmanas and officiating priests, worship *dakshinagni*. [607] Follow the rites of *abhichara*. [608] Surrounded by pramathas, like a brahmana who is used for a specific purpose, that fire will accomplish your objective.” Thus instructed, he followed the abhichara vow and directed it towards Krishna. The fire arose in personified form from the sacrificial pit, extremely terrible in form. His tuft of hair, moustache and beard had the complexion of molten copper. His eyes were like burning coal. There were tusks as his teeth and his eyebrows were furrowed and arched. His face was harsh and he licked the corners of his mouth with his tongue. He was naked and he brandished a blazing trident. On feet that were as large as palm trees,

he made the earth tremble. Surrounded by bhutas, he rushed towards Dvaraka, setting the directions ablaze. The residents of Dvaraka saw him advance towards them, burning everything. All of them were terrified, like animals at a forest conflagration. The illustrious one was playing with dice in an assembly hall. Afflicted by fear, they screamed, "Save us. O lord of the three worlds! Save us. The fire is burning down the city." He heard about it from the people and saw that those who were his own were suffering. The granter of refuge laughed and said, "Do not be scared. I will grant you protection." The lord is a witness who is inside and outside everything. He knew that this demoness [609] had been unleashed by Maheshvara. The chakra was by his side and he commanded it to destroy her. Sudarshana blazed like one crore suns. It was as resplendent and dazzling as the fire of universal destruction. Mukunda's chakra radiated the sky, the directions, heaven and earth with its own energy and made the fire suffer. O king! The fire created by the demoness was repulsed by the energy of the weapon of the one who holds a chakra in his hand. Its face shattered, it retreated and approached Varanasi. Though Sudakshina had created it through abhichara for his own purpose, it burnt him, his officiating priests and his relatives down. Commanded by Vishnu, the chakra followed and burnt down Varanasi, with its towers, assembly halls, residences, shops, arches, mansions, treasuries, storehouses, kitchens and buildings for housing elephants, horses and chariots. Having burnt down everything in Varanasi, Vishnu's Sudarshana chakra again presented itself by the side of Krishna, whose deeds are unblemished. If a mortal person controls himself and hears about Uttamashloka's valour, or makes it heard, he is cleansed of all sins.'

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The king asked, 'I again wish to hear about Rama's extraordinary deeds. The lord is infinite and immeasurable. What else did he do?'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'There was an ape named Dvivida and he was Naraka's friend. The valiant one was Mainda's brother and was Sugriva's advis-

er. As an act of vengeance for his friend, the ape created havoc in the kingdom. He set cities, villages, mines and cowherd settlements on fire by igniting flames. On one occasion, he uprooted a mountain and pulverized all the regions, especially of Anarta. That is where Hari, his friend's killer, dwelt. He possessed the strength of ten thousand elephants. On another occasion, he used his arms to agitate the ocean. He hurled that water at regions and submerged the areas around the coast. He shattered the trees in the hermitages of the foremost rishis. The wicked one used urine and excrement to defile the sacrificial fires. Like a wasp sealing up insects, [610] the insolent one hurled men and women inside caves in the valley of a mountain and sealed them up with boulders.

'Once, he was thus engaged in devastating kingdoms and polluting the women of noble families. Hearing an extremely melodious song emanating from Mount Raivataka, he went there. There, he saw Rama, the lord of the Yadus, wearing a garland made out of lotuses. All his limbs were exceedingly handsome. He was in the midst of a crowd of beautiful women and he was singing. Since he had drunk varuni, his eyes rolled with intoxication. His body was radiant and he was like an elephant that was in musth. The wicked ape climbed a tree and shook the branches. He made a *kilakila* sound, [611] so that he might be noticed. When they noticed the ape's insolence, Baladeva's wives started to laugh. They were young women, naturally given to joking. They loved to laugh. While Rama looked on, the ape slighted them by twisting his eyebrows and making faces at them. He displayed his anus to them. Bala, supreme among strikers, became angry. He picked up a rock and hurled it. Avoiding the rock, the ape seized the pot of liquor. Showing more disrespect, the wily one laughed, angering him even more. The wicked one broke the pot and tugged at their garments. [612] The powerful one, inflated by his own insolence, slighted and showed greater disrespect towards Bala. He saw his arrogance and the devastation he had wrought in the kingdoms. So as to kill the enemy, he angrily picked up his club and his plough. The greatly valiant Dvivida picked up a *shala* tree in his hand. He rushed forward towards Bala and powerfully struck him on the head with this. However, Samkarshana was as immobile as a mountain. As

it descended, the powerful one seized it. He used Sunanda [613] to strike back. Struck by the club on his head, he was radiant and streams of blood started to flow. He was like a mountain from which red minerals were flowing. However, he did not even think about the blow. He again uprooted a tree and used his strength to strip it off its leaves. Extremely angry, he struck again, but Bala shattered it into one hundred fragments. He angrily struck with another tree. But this too was shattered into one hundred fragments. Thus, he repeatedly fought against the illustrious one and the trees were repeatedly shattered. He uprooted trees in every direction and the forest became bereft of trees. Intolerant, he showered down a mass of rocks on Bala. But playfully, the one whose weapon is the club, shattered all of these. The lord of the apes now clenched his arms, which were like palm trees, into fists. He approached Rohini's son and struck him on the chest with these. The Indra among the Yadavas flung aside his club and his plough. He angrily struck him on the collarbone with his two hands. He [614] started to vomit blood and fell down. O tiger among the Kuru lineage! When he fell down, the mountain, [615] with its summits and trees, trembled, like a boat tossed around on the water by the wind. Gods, Siddhas and Indras among sages showered down flowers from the firmament and exclaimed, "Victory to you! We bow down to you! This is wonderful! This is praiseworthy!" In this way, Dvivida, who had caused devastation in the world, was killed. Praised by the people, the illustrious one entered his own city.'

Chapter 10(68)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O king! Samba, Jambavati's son, who was victorious in assemblies, abducted Duryodhana's daughter, Lakshmana, from her svayamvara ceremony. The angry Kouravas said, "This boy is insolent and has shown us disrespect. Against her wishes, he has forcibly abducted the maiden. Let us imprison this insolent one. What can the Vrishnis do? We showed them our favours by bestowing this land on them. That is what they are enjoying. On hearing that their son has been captured, if the Vrishnis

come here, we will shatter their insolence. Like the breath of life when it is controlled, they will be pacified." Sanctioned by the elders of the Kuru lineage, Karna, Shala, Bhuri, Yajna, Ketu and Suyodhana set out to fight against Samba. Seeing that he was being followed by those on Dhritarashtra's side, maharatha Samba picked up his bow. He stood alone, like a lion. They wished to capture him and angrily said, "Stay. Wait." With Karna at the forefront, those archers approached him and showered him with arrows. O best among the Kuru lineage! Though he was assailed by them, the descendant of the Yadu lineage, the son of the inconceivable one, did not tolerate it. He was like a lion against inferior animals. He stretched his beautiful bow and pierced all of them with arrows. The valiant one simultaneously pierced the six charioteers, Karna and the others, with separate arrows. He struck each of the four horses with four arrows and each of the charioteers and chariot drivers with one arrow. At this, all those great archers applauded him. However, they deprived him of his chariot. Four of them killed his four horses, one killed his charioteer and another broke his bow. When he had been deprived of his chariot, with a great deal of difficulty, the Kourava warriors bound him. Having triumphed, they took the boy and their own daughter and entered their own city.

'O king! Hearing about this from Narada, they [616] were filled with intolerance. Urged by Ugrasena, they made attempts to act against the Kurus. However, Rama pacified the armoured bulls among the Vrishnis. He did not wish for dissension between the Kurus and the Vrishnis. He wished to dispel the contamination that would result from conflict. Instead, on a chariot that was as resplendent as the sun, he went to Hastinapura. Brahmanas and aged ones of the lineage surrounded him, like the planets around the moon. Having gone there, Rama remained in a grove that was outside Gajasahvya. [617] He sent Uddhava to Dhritarashtra to ascertain their intentions. Honouring Ambika's son, [618] Bhishma, Drona, Bahlika and Duryodhana in the proper way, he told them about Rama's arrival. Hearing that Rama, the best among their well-wishers, had come, they were extremely happy. Having honoured him, [619] all of them went forward, with auspicious objects in their hands. As is proper, they met him and offered him a cow and arghya. [620]

Knowing about Bala's powers, they bowed their heads down. After hearing that their relatives were well, they were asked about their own welfare and health. Once they had respectively conversed with each other, Rama addressed them in these fearless words. "Ugrasena is the lord of all the lords on earth. Hear about what the lord has commanded. You should listen to this attentively. After that, without any delay, you should act accordingly. Following adharma, many of you fought against a single person who was observing dharma. You bound him up. Nevertheless, with a desire to ensure unity amongst relatives, I am tolerating this." Baladeva's words were full of bravery, valour and strength and were full of his own powers. Nevertheless, hearing this, the Kurus became angry. They said, "This is a great wonder. The progress of destiny is certainly impossible to cross. A piece of footwear now wants to step on a head that wears the crown. Since the Vrishnis are bound to us through matrimonial alliances, we allow them to share our couches, our seats and our food. We have granted them equality and it is because of us that they have obtained royal thrones. It is because we ignored them that they enjoyed whisks, fans, conch shells, white umbrellas, crowns, seats and couches. [621] But enough of granting the Yadus signs of royalty. Like hooded serpents that are fed amrita, they turn against their benefactors. The Yadavas have been made prosperous because of our favours. But like those who have lost all sense of shame, they are now ordering us. Even Indra will not dare to appropriate something that Kurus like Bhishma, Drona, Arjuna and the others have not given him. Does a ram desire something a lion has seized?" O bull among the Bharata lineage! They were insolent because of their birth, relatives and great prosperity. Having made Rama hear these wicked words, those uncivilized ones entered the city.

'Witnessing the evil conduct of the Kurus and hearing those wicked words, Achyuta [622] became filled with wrath and intolerance and he was impossible to behold. He laughed repeatedly and said, "It is evident that these wicked ones are so insolent that they do not wish for peace. Like a stick is used against an animal, let them then be chastened with punishment. I gently appeased the intolerant Yadus and the angry Krishna. I came here, desiring peace with them. But these ones are evil in intelligence. They are de-

ceitful and love conflict. They have repeatedly slighted me. They have insulted me by using wicked words against me. Shakra and the other guardians of the world followed Ugrasena's command. He is the lord of the Bhojas, Vrishnis and Andhakas. Yet they say he is not a lord. He [623] is seated in Sudharma. He brought and enjoys parijata, the tree of the immortals. Yet they say he is not fit to sit on a throne. Shri, the goddess of everything, herself worships his feet. Yet, Shri's lord does not deserve the insignia of a king of men. The dust of his lotus feet is borne on the heads of all the guardians of the worlds. Among tirthas, he is worshipped as the greatest tirtha. Brahma, Bhava, I and Shri are only portions of his various portions. We too bear that dust for a long time. He does not deserve a king's throne. We, Vrishnis, only enjoy that bit of the earth that has been given to us by the Kurus. We are only footwear, while the Kurus are themselves the head. Alas! They are intoxicated and insolent because of their prosperity, like those who are inebriated. These words are incoherent and harsh. Which person, capable of chastising, will tolerate them? Today, I will remove all Kouravas from the earth." Extremely angry, he seized his plough. He stood up, as if he was going to burn down the three worlds. Using the tip of his plough, he raised the city of Gajasahvya. Angry, he dragged it towards the Ganga, ready to fling it in. The Kouravas were filled with terror. Their city was being whirled around like a raft. It was about to descend into the Ganga. They saw that it was being dragged in that direction. Wishing to save themselves and their families, they sought refuge with him, placing Samba and Lakshmana at the forefront. They joined their hands in salutation before the lord. "O Rama! O foundation of everything! O Rama! We do not know your powers. We are foolish and wicked in intelligence. You should pardon our transgression. You alone are responsible for creation, preservation and destruction. There is no cause other than you. O lord! It is said that the worlds are your playthings and that you play with them. O Ananta! In your pastimes, you alone hold up the entire earth on your one thousand hoods. At the end, you are the one who withdraws the entire universe into your own atman. You lie down, without any second entity existing. Your anger is for the sake of instructing everyone, not because of hatred or envy. O illustrious

one! Basing yourself on sattva, you are intent on protecting and preserving. We bow down before the one who is in the atman of all creatures. O one who possesses all the potencies! O one without decay! We bow down before the one who is the creator of the universe. We have sought refuge with you." Since their habitation was trembling, anxious, they sought refuge with Bala. Extremely pleased, he showed them his favours and granted them freedom from fear. Affectionate towards his daughter, as a wedding gift, Duryodhana gave twelve hundred elephants that were sixty years old, ten thousand horses, six thousand golden chariots that were as radiant as the sun and one thousand female servants with golden necklaces. [624] The illustrious bull among the Satvatas accepted everything. He left with his son [625] and his daughter-in-law, honoured by his well-wishers. After this, the wielder of the plough entered his own city and met his relatives, whose hearts were attached to him. In the midst of an assembly, he told all the bulls among the Yadus about what he had done vis-à-vis the Kurus. Even today, that city [626] displays signs of Rama's valour. An elevation can be seen along the southern side, along the banks of the Ganga.'

Chapter 10(69)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Narada heard about Naraka's death and that Krishna had alone married several women. He wished to see him. It was extraordinary that though he possessed a single body, he simultaneously and separately married sixteen thousand women. Though alone, he dwelt in all their houses. Eager to witness this, the devarshi went to Dvaravati, which was beautiful because of blossoming groves and pleasure gardens, filled with sounds of birds and bees. The lakes were full of blooming blue lotuses, lotuses that blossomed during the day, white lotuses, lotuses that blossomed during the night and water lilies. They were filled with the loud sounds of swans and cranes calling. There were nine hundred thousand palaces, made out of crystal and silver. These were ornamented with the best of emeralds, gold, jewels and furnishings. The city was laid out with main roads, smaller

roads, quadrangles, markets, assembly halls and shrines for the gods, and was beautiful. The roads, courtyards, avenues and gates were sprinkled with water. Fluttering flags and pennants warded off the heat of the sun. Hari's beautiful inner quarters were worshipped by all the lords. In constructing it, Tvashta had exhibited all his skills. It was ornamented with sixteen thousand residences, for each of Shouri's wives. He [627] entered one of these great residences. It was supported by coral pillars, studded with excellent lapis lazuli. The walls were made out of sapphire and so were the floors, which sparkled continuously. Tvashta had constructed canopies, with nets of pearls that hung down. The couches and seats were fashioned out of ivory and were studded with excellent jewels. There were female servants with necklaces made out of gold coins, ornamented and attired in excellent garments. The men wore jackets, headdresses, excellent garments and earrings made out of jewels. The darkness was dispelled by the illumination created by bejewelled lamps. O dear one! Colourful peacocks danced there. As the smell of aloe and incense flowed out through apertures in the lattice, they called out loudly, taking these to be clouds.

'The brahmana saw the lord of the Satvatas there. One of his wives was fanning him with a whisk made out of yak hair, with a golden handle. In turn, she was served by one thousand female servants, who were identical in qualities, beauty, youth and excellent attire. The illustrious one is the best among all those who uphold dharma. On seeing him, he quickly arose from Rukmini's bed. [628] He bowed his diademed head down at his feet. He joined his hands in salutation and made him sit on his own seat. He was the preceptor of the universe and the lord of the virtuous. Nevertheless, he washed his feet and placed that water on his own head. His qualities were appropriate for the appellation *brahmanya-deva*. [629] The waters that wash his feet are the ultimate tirtha. [630] Having worshipped the devarshi according to the rites, Narayana, the ancient rishi who was Nara's friend, conversed with him in measured words that were as sweet as amrita. He asked, "O lord! What can we do for you?" Narada replied, "O lord! You are the protector of all the worlds. You are friendly towards all people and chastise the deceitful. O one who is praised! For benefit and for the preservation and protec-

tion of the universe, you assume your own avataras. We know this well and, therefore, this behaviour on your part isn't extraordinary. I have seen your feet, which bring liberation to creatures. Brahma and the others, unfathomable in their intelligence, think about them in their hearts. Those who have fallen into the well of samsara seek them out for support. Please grant me the favour that I remember your feet and meditate on them." After this, Narada entered the residence of another one of Krishna's wives. He desired to see the yoga maya of the lord of all the lords of yoga.

'There, he saw him playing with dice with his beloved [631] and Uddhava. He stood up, worshipped him with supreme devotion and gave him a seat and other objects. As if he did not know, he asked him, "When did you arrive? We are incomplete people. What can we do for a complete person like you? O brahmana! Tell us and make our births auspicious." Astonished, he [632] stood up. Silent, he went to another house. He saw Govinda there, fondling his infant sons. In another house, he saw him making arrangements to have a bath. In one house, he was offering oblations into the fire and performing the five sacrifices. [633] In one place, he found him feeding brahmanas. In another, he was eating the food that was left. In one place, he was seated, performing the sandhya rituals. In another, he had controlled his speech and was chanting about the brahman. In one place, he was practising movements with a sword and a shield. In another place, Gada's elder brother was roaming around on horses, elephants or chariots. In some places, he was resting on a couch, praised by bandis. In one place, he was consulting with his ministers, Uddhava and the others. In another place, he was playing in the water, surrounded by the best of courtesans. In some places, he was donating ornamented cows to the best among brahmanas. In other places, he was listening to auspicious accounts from the Itihasa [634] and the Puranas. In one house, he was laughing with his beloved, having recounted an amusing story. In some places, he was serving dharma. In other places, he was pursuing artha and kama. In some places, he was seated alone, meditating on Purusha, superior to Prakriti. In some places, he was serving the seniors, offering them objects of pleasure and worshipping them. In some places, Keshava was planning for war. In others, he was planning for alliances. In some

places, with Rama, he was discussing the welfare of the virtuous. In some places, he was following the ordinances and at the right age, getting his sons and daughters married to wives and husbands who were equal in prosperity. He was arranging for great festivities, sending his children off and receiving them [635] and all the people were amazed to see what the lord of yoga did. In some places, he worshipped all the gods through kratus. In other places, he performed *purta dharma* [636] by digging wells and constructing pleasure grounds and *matha*s. [637] In some places, astride horses from the Sindhu region, [638] he was engaged in hunting. Surrounded by the bulls among the Yadus, he was killing animals meant for sacrifices. In some places, without any signs of who he was, the lord of yoga was roaming around in the inner quarters and homes as an ordinary person, wishing to know what people were thinking.

'Having witnessed Hrishikesha's yoga maya and his assumption of human conduct, Narada smiled and spoke to him. "We know about your yoga maya, having served at your feet. Even those who know about maya find this impossible to comprehend. O lord of yoga! O atman! O god! Grant me leave. I will travel around the worlds, which are flooded with your fame, chanting about your pastimes, which purify the world." The illustrious one replied, "O brahmana! I am the one who speaks about dharma. I am the one who performs it and I am the one who sanctions it. O son! Do not be distressed. I have come to this world so that I can instruct." [639] Thus, in all the houses, he saw the same one present, observing the dharma of the virtuous, meant to purify householders. Krishna is infinite in his valour. The rishi had been curious about his pervasive yoga maya. Having repeatedly witnessed it, he was astounded. In this way, Krishna exhibited his own faith in artha, kama and dharma and honoured him properly. Delighted and remembering him, he departed. O dear one! He followed the conduct of humans. Narayana, the creator of everything, used his powers in this fashion. He amused himself with sixteen thousand beautiful women. Casting their bashful, affectionate and smiling glances at him, they were satisfied. He is the cause behind the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe. Hari's deeds were impossible for anyone else to perform. O dear one! If a

person sings about them, hears them or approves of them, he has devotion towards the illustrious one, which is the path for liberation.'

Chapter 10(70)

Shri-Shuka said, 'When dawn approached, the cocks started to crow and clinging to the neck of their husband, Madhava's wives, afflicted by the prospect of separation from him, cursed them. The birds called loudly and woke Krishna up from his sleep. Bandis sang about him and the breeze bore the scent from mandara groves. [640] Though this was an extremely auspicious time, the princess of Vidarbha [641] did not like it, since she would be deprived of the embrace of her beloved's arms. Madhava arose at brahma muhurta. He touched water, cleansed himself and meditated on the atman, which is beyond darkness, which is alone and self-illuminating and is infinite and without decay. It is always established in his own nature and destroys all impurities. It is his own powers, the cause behind the creation, preservation and destruction of the world, that is known as the brahman. In this way, he manifests his existence and bliss. Following the rites, he bathed in sparkling water. He performed the rituals and wore his two garments. The excellent one performed the sandhya rituals and offered oblations into the fire. Silently, he chanted on the brahman. [642] Every day, he worshipped the rising sun, which was a manifestation of his own atman. In control of his atman, he worshipped gods, rishis, ancestors, the aged and brahmanas. He gave brahmanas cows that were well behaved, with gold-encased horns, ornamented with necklaces made out of pearls. They yielded milk and had calved only once. He covered them with excellent coverings and donated them along with their calves. Their hooves were plated with silver. Along with them, he also gave linen garments, deerskin and sesamum seeds. Every day, he gave brahmanas large numbers [643] of such ornamented cows. He worshipped all the cattle, brahmanas, the aged, seniors and creatures, which were manifestations of his own self. He then touched auspicious objects. Though he was an ornament in the world of men, he ornamented himself

with his own garments, ornaments, divine garlands and pastes. He looked at *ghee*, a mirror, cows, bulls, brahmanas and gods. [644] He gave all the varnas, the residents of the city and those who were in the inner quarters and the ministers the objects of desire they wished for. He honoured and satisfied them. He first distributed garlands, betel leaves and pastes to brahmanas. He gave them to his well-wishers, his ministers and his wives. It is only after this that he himself accepted them. The charioteer brought his extremely wonderful chariot, yoked to Sugriva and the other horses. He bowed down and stood in front of him. Along with Satyaki and Uddhava, he held the charioteer's hand in his hand and mounted the chariot, resembling the sun atop the eastern mountain. With bashful glances full of affection, the women of the inner quarters looked at him. They let go of him with great difficulty. He departed, stealing their hearts with his smiles.

'O dear one! Surrounded by all the Vrishnis, he entered the assembly hall known as Sudharma. Those who enter it do not suffer from the six hardships. [645] There, the lord seated himself on a supreme seat. His own radiance illuminated all the directions. Surrounded by the Yadus, lions among men, the best of the Yadus resembled the lord of the stars in the firmament, surrounded by large numbers of stars. O king! There, the jesters amused the lord with diverse jokes. Those who were masters of dancing presented themselves, along with female dancers. Each separately performed tandava dances. [646] There were the sounds of *mridanga*s, veenas, flutes, *tala*s and conch shells. [647] Sutas, magadhas and bandis danced and sang and praised him. Some brahmanas seated there knew about the brahman and chanted about it. Others recounted the stories of former kings, famous for their piety.

'O king! Once, a man arrived there. He had never been seen before. The gatekeepers told the illustrious one that he had come and made him enter. He joined his hands in salutation and bowed down before Krishna, the supreme lord. He told him about the misery of the kings who had been imprisoned by Jarasandha. When he was engaged in his conquest, twenty thousand kings did not submit to him. They were forcibly imprisoned in Girivraja. [648] "O Krishna! [649] O one whose atman is immeasurable! O

Krishna! O one who destroys fear! We seek refuge with you. Despite our intelligence being separate, [650] we are terrified of material existence and seek shelter with you. Because they are distracted, people are always accomplished in performing perverse deeds. For their own benefit, you have spoken about the karma of worshipping you. In the hope of remaining alive, which is extremely powerful in this world, we are bowing down before you. You are the one who instantly severs that hope in a nimesha. You are the controller of the universe. For the welfare of this world, you have descended so as to protect it, and to restrain those who are deceitful. O lord! How can someone transgress your commands? How can such a person do what he himself wills and still obtain the fruits? [651] We do not understand this. O lord! We are under the control of someone else and royal happiness is like a dream. We are constantly afraid and are bearing this burden, like those who are dead. We have given up the happiness for our atmans, which is only available in this world from you. We are suffering a lot. Because of your maya, we are miserable in this world. Your two feet destroy the grief of those who prostrate themselves before you. Please remove this bondage of our karma, which goes by the name of what Magadha has done. He alone wields the power of ten thousand elephants. Therefore, he has imprisoned us in his residence, like a king of animals does to sheep. O wielder of the chakra! You are infinite in your valour. On eighteen occasions, you routed the deceitful one in battles. Since you have followed the conduct of the world of men, he has defeated you only once. However, his insolence has become firm. He torments your subjects. O invincible one! Please do something." The messenger added, "In this way, those who have been imprisoned by Magadha desire to see you. They are distressed and seek the shelter of your feet. Please do something for their benefit." While the messenger of the kings was speaking in this way, the extremely resplendent devarshi appeared. With the mass of golden and matted hair on his head, he was radiant, as if the sun had appeared. On seeing him, the lord of all the lords of the worlds, the illustrious Krishna, was delighted. He stood up and, with those in the assembly hall and his followers, bowed his head down and worshipped him.

‘After the sage had been honoured in the proper way and had taken a seat, he satisfied him by addressing him in these well-articulated and reverent words. “Are the three worlds now free from fear from all the directions? O illustrious one! We know that you possess the quality of roaming around the worlds. Among everything that the lord has created in the worlds, there is nothing that is unknown to you. Hence, we are asking you. What do the Pandavas wish to do?” Narada replied, “O lord! On many occasions, I have witnessed your maya, which is impossible to transgress. It confounds even the creator of the world. [652] Despite your own powers, you roam around among creatures on earth, like the flames of a concealed fire. [653] Therefore, this is not extraordinary. Who can completely comprehend what you do? Using your maya, you create and you destroy. Everything that exists is because of your atman, though your own atman cannot be detected. I bow down to you. The living being is caught in the midst of undesirable things in samsara and does not know how to free himself. In your pastimes, you assume avataras and use your own fame as a lamp that blazes. Therefore, I surrender myself to you. O brahman! However, you are imitating the world of men. Hence, I will tell you. I will tell you what the king, [654] your father’s sister’s son who is devoted to you, wishes to do. The Pandava will worship you by performing *rajasuya*, foremost among sacrifices. The king wishes for complete sovereignty. You should approve of the idea. O god! Wishing to see you, all the gods, others and the famous kings will assemble at that excellent sacrifice. Even those who live at the periphery [655] are purified by hearing about you, chanting about you and meditating on you. You are the lord who is full of the brahman. What needs to be said about those who see you and touch you? Your unblemished fame has spread like a canopy through heaven, the earth, rasatala and the directions. It brings all that is auspicious to the world. The waters, Mandakini in heaven, Bhogavati in the nether regions and Ganga in this world, [656] wash your feet and purify the universe.” Those on his side did not agree to this, because they wanted to be victorious. [657] Keshava smiled at his servant, Uddhava, and spoke these gentle words. The illustrious one said, “You are our supreme eye and well-wisher. You know about counselling and accomplishing the objective.

Therefore, tell us what should be done now. We will trust you and act accordingly." Thus instructed by his master, though he knew everything, Uddhava seemed to be confused. With his head bowed down, he accepted the command and replied.'

Chapter 10(71)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Having heard what the devarshi had said and having ascertained the views of the assembly and Krishna, the immensely intelligent Uddhava spoke. Uddhava said, "O god! As stated by the rishi, you must assist the sacrifice of your father's sister's son, but you must also protect those who have sought refuge. O lord! The rajasuya sacrifice can only be performed after a person's wheel has conquered all the directions. Therefore, Jara's son must be defeated. In my view, both tasks can be accomplished. Through this, a great objective will be accomplished by us. O Govinda! The kings will be freed from their bondage. Thereby, your fame will increase. That king possesses the strength of ten thousand elephants and is impossible to withstand. He is strong. Other than Bhima, there is no one who is his equal in strength. He can be defeated in a duel, not when he is with one hundred akshouhinis. He is so devoted to brahmanas that he never refuses a request made by a brahmana. Vrikodara [658] should go to him in the garb of a brahmana and request him. In your presence, there is no doubt that he will kill him in a duel. You are the supreme lord. You are time. Hiranyagarbha and Sharva, [659] responsible for the creation and destruction of the universe, are but your forms. In their homes, the queens will sing about your extensive deed of killing the common enemy of the kings and about freeing them, just as the gopis did. [660] Sages who seek refuge with you will sing about setting free of the king of elephants, Janaka's daughter and your parents. [661] O Krishna! The slaying of Jarasandha will accomplish several objectives. It will cook what has not been cooked. [662] Hence, you should approve of the sacrifice." O king! These words were welcome and infallible in every possible way. The devarshi, the aged among the Yadus and Krishna applauded them. Devaki's illustrious son instructed the servants, Daruka, Jaitra and the others, to make preparations for the journey. The lord took the permission of the seniors.'

‘O destroyer of enemies! He arranged for the departure of his wives, his sons and their attendants. He took the permission of Samkarshana and the king of the Yadus. [663] He then mounted his own chariot, brought there by the charioteer, with Garuda on the standard. He was surrounded by a fearful army of chariots, elephants, soldiers, horse riders and their leaders. Drums, larger drums, kettledrums, conch shells and trumpets were sounded, resounding in the directions. He emerged. Excellent in their vows, along with their sons, Achuyta’s wives followed their husband, astride golden palanquins borne by men. They were adorned with the best of garments, ornaments, pastes and garlands. On all sides, they were surrounded by men with swords and shields in their hands. The ornamented attendants [664] and courtesans were borne by men, [665] camels, buffaloes, donkeys, mules, carts and female elephants. Everything required, huts made of grass, blankets, clothing and other equipment, was loaded. It resembled an ocean agitated by timinigilas and waves. There was the large army, with its standards, banners, umbrellas, whisks and the best of weapons, ornaments, diadems [666] and armour. There was a tumultuous sound and it was brilliant, as the sun’s rays reflected off it. Honoured by the lord of the Yadus, the sage [667] bowed down. Placing him in his heart, he left through the sky. He had been honoured and had heard the decision. Having met Mukunda, all his senses had been gratified. The illustrious one addressed the messenger of the kings in pleasant words. “O messenger! O fortunate one! Do not be scared. I will arrange for Magadha to be slain.” Thus addressed, the messenger left and reported it accurately to the kings. Desiring to be freed, the kings waited to meet Shouri. Hari passed through Anarta, Souvira, Maru, Vinashana, mountains, rivers, cities, villages, settlements of cowherds and mines. Mukunda crossed Drishadvati and Sarasvati. Having crossed Panchala and Matsya, he arrived at Shakraprastha. [668]

‘Men find it extremely difficult to see him. Hearing that he had arrived, Ajatashatru [669] was delighted. He emerged with his priests and well-wishers. There was the sound of singing and the playing of musical instruments. Sounds of the brahman were chanted. He approached Hrishikesha, just as the senses welcome the breath of life. Seeing Krishna, Pandava’s heart

melted with affection. He had seen his loved one after a long time and he repeatedly embraced him. With his arms, he embraced Rama's unblemished abode. From the touch of Mukunda's body, everything inauspicious was removed from the king. There were tears in his eyes and he obtained supreme satisfaction. His body was exhilarated and he forgot the delusion of this world. Bhima smiled and embraced his maternal uncle's son. He was satisfied. His eyes filled with tear and his senses were overwhelmed with affection. The twins and Kiriti [670] were delighted. Shedding profuse tears, they embraced Achyuta, the most loved among their well-wishers. Arjuna embraced him and the twins worshipped him. As was befitting, he worshipped the brahmanas and the aged. He was honoured by the Kurus, Srinjayas and Kekayas and honoured them back. Sutas, magadhas, gandharvas, bandis, jesters and brahmanas praised the lotus-eyed one. There was singing and dancing. Drums, conch shells, tabors, veenas, kettledrums and trumpets were sounded. Thus surrounded by his well-wishers, the illustrious Uttamashloka, [671] the crest among jewels, was praised and entered the ornamented city. The roads were sprinkled with water mixed with the scent from the musth of elephants. It was decorated with colourful flags, golden arches and pots filled with water. Men and young women were resplendent, decorating themselves with excellent garments, ornaments, garlands and fragrances. He saw the ornamented residences in the abode of the king of the Kurus. Arrays of lamps were lit. There were offerings. The fragrant smell of incense emerged through the apertures in the lattice work. Banners fluttered. The tops of the houses had golden pots, with bases made out of silver. He was like a vessel from which the eyes of men drank. Hearing that he had arrived, the young women were eager to see him and emerged on the royal road. In their haste, their hair was dishevelled and the knots of their garments were loosened. They immediately left their household tasks and the beds of their husbands. But the roads were crowded with elephants, horses, chariots and bipeds. To see Krishna and his wives, the women climbed on the tops of their houses. Embracing him in their minds, they showered down flowers. They welcomed him with their smiling glances. Along the road, the women saw Mukunda's wives, like the stars with the lord of the

stars. They exclaimed, “What deeds have they performed? Their eyes can see this jewel among men, with his generous smiles and playful glances. Even a bit of that is like a festivity.” Here and there, the citizens approached with auspicious objects in their hands. They worshipped Krishna. So did the leaders of the shrenis and their sins were cleansed.

‘Their eyes full of delight, those in the inner quarters hurried and approached Mukunda, as he entered the king’s residence. Pritha saw Krishna, her brother’s son, the lord of the three worlds. Along with her daughter-in-law, [672] she happily arose from her couch and embraced him. The king welcomed Govinda, the lord of the gods, to his house and welcomed him. He was so overwhelmed with joy that he did not know how to worship him. O king! Krishna bowed down before his father’s sister and the wives of the elders. Krishnaa and his own sister bowed down to him. [673] Urged by her mother-in-law, Krishnaa worshipped all of Krishna’s wives—Rukmini, Satya, Bhadra, Jambavati, Kalindi, Mitravinda, Shaibya and the virtuous Nagnajiti, as well as the others who had arrived, with garments, garlands and ornaments. Dharmaraja made comfortable arrangements for Janardana to reside in. Every day, he made new arrangements for him, his soldiers, his followers and his wives. Along with Phalguna, he satisfied the fire god with Khandava. When Maya was freed, he constructed a divine assembly hall for the king. [674] So as to bring pleasure to the king, he [675] resided there for a few months. Surrounded by soldiers and with Phalguna on a chariot, he would amuse himself.’

Chapter 10(72)

Shri-Shuka said, ‘Once, Yudhishthira was seated in his assembly hall, surrounded by sages, brahmanas, kshatriyas, vaishyas, his brothers, preceptors, elders of the lineage, relatives, matrimonial allies and kin. While all of them heard, he spoke the following words. Yudhishthira said, “O Govinda! O lord! I wish to perform the purifying rajasuya sacrifice, the king of sacrifices, and worship your potencies. Please help us to accomplish it. O lord!

Those who constantly serve your footwear, meditate on them and sing about them are purified and everything that is inauspicious is destroyed for them. O one with the lotus in your navel! They obtain emancipation from samsara. If they have wishes, those are satisfied. But this is not true of others. [676] O god of the gods! Let the worlds witness the power that comes from serving your lotus feet, the difference in status between those who worship you and those who do not worship you. O lord! Display this to the Kurus and the Srinjayas. You are the brahman and your mind does not distinguish between those who are your own and those who are not your own. You are in all atmans. You are impartial in your outlook. You experience bliss within your own self. You are like the tree of the gods. [677] Those who serve you obtain favours that are proportionate to the service they render. There is no violation of this." The illustrious one replied, "O king! O afflicter of enemies! This decision of yours is appropriate. Through this, the worlds will witness your auspicious fame. O lord! This king of sacrifices is not only desired by us, your well-wishers, but also by the rishis, the gods and all creatures. Defeat all the kings and bring the entire earth under your subjugation. Collect all the necessary objects and perform this great sacrifice. O king! These brothers of yours have been born as portions of the guardians of the worlds. Those who have not cleansed their atmans find it impossible to conquer me. But I have been conquered by you. If a person is devoted to me, no one in the worlds is capable of overcoming him in energy, fame, prosperity and powers, not even a god. What need one say about a king?" Hearing what the illustrious one had said, his [678] face was delighted and resembled a blooming lotus.

'He engaged his brothers, who were imbued with Vishnu's energy, in conquering the directions. Along with the Srinjayas, Sahadeva was sent to the south. Nakula was sent to the west and Savyasachi [679] to the north. Along with the Matsyas, Kekayas and Madras, Vrikodara [680] was sent to the east. O king! Those brave ones used their energy to defeat the kings. From the directions, they brought a lot of wealth for Ajatashatru to perform the sacrifice. However, on hearing that Jarasandha had not been defeated, the king thought about this. Hari told him about the means that Uddhava had

earlier spoken about. Bhimasena, Arjuna and Krishna, assumed the disguise of three brahmanas. O son! They went to Girivraja, where Brihadratha's son was. The king was devoted to brahmanas and observed the rites of a householder. They reached at the time meant for receiving guests. [681] Disguised as brahmanas, they begged him. "O king! Know us as atithis who have come from a long distance away for a specific purpose. O fortunate one! Therefore, grant us what we wish for. [682] For those who have fortitude, there is nothing that is intolerable. There is nothing that the wicked will not do. There is nothing that a generous person will not give. For those who are impartial in vision, there is no one who is a stranger. This body is impermanent. Despite being able to do so, if a person does not use it to acquire the eternal fame that is sung about by the virtuous, he is contemptible and one should grieve about him. Harishchandra, Rantideva, Unchhavritti, Shibi, Bali, the hunter, the pigeon—there are many who used the impermanent to obtain an eternal state." [683] From their voices, their forms and the marks left on their forearms by bowstrings, he discerned that they were related to royal families. He thought about whether he had seen them earlier. "Though they are in the disguise of brahmanas, they are certainly related to royal families. However, I must give them what they beg for, even if it is my body, which is so very difficult to give up. Bali's sparkling and pervasive fame is heard about in all the directions, despite his being dislodged from his prosperity by Vishnu in the form of a brahmana. The king of the daityas knew that in the form of a brahmana, for Indra's sake, Vishnu wished to rob him of his prosperity. Despite being restrained, [684] he gave him the earth. Life is for the sake of brahmanas. For a kshatra-bandhu, it has no other purpose. Even if the body falls down, one must strive for eternal fame." Generous in his intelligence, he spoke to Krishna, Arjuna and Vrikodara, "O brahmanas! I will give you what you ask for, even if it happens to be my own head." The illustrious one replied, "O Indra among kings! Fight with us. If you find it proper, grant us a duel. We belong to royal lineages. We have come here for a fight and we desire nothing else. This is Vrikodara, Pritha's son. This is his brother, Arjuna. Know me as Krishna, your enemy. They are the sons of my father's sister." Thus addressed, the king of Magadha laughed loudly.

Full of intolerance, he said, “O foolish ones! In that case, I will grant you a fight. I will not fight with you. You are a coward and your energy deserted you in a battle. You abandoned Mathura, your own city, and sought shelter in the ocean. This Arjuna is not my equal in age. Nor is he my equal in strength. He is not a proper adversary. Bhima is my equal in strength.” Having said this, he gave Bhimasena a large club. Seizing a second one himself, he went outside the city.

‘On level ground, those two brave ones engaged with each other. Both of them were indomitable in the encounter and struck each other with clubs that were like the vajra. Following wonderful modes, they wheeled to the left and to the right. As they moved around in that encounter, they were as beautiful as actors on a stage. O king! As they hurled their clubs at each other, like two tusked elephants, there was a clapping sound, like that of thunder. Using the force of their arms, they brought the clubs down on each other, on shoulders, hips, feet, hands, thighs and collarbones. With their rage ignited, they fought against each other like two elephants and like branches of arka trees, [685] the weapons were fragmented. When the two clubs were fragmented, those two brave men angrily struck each other with their fists, which were like iron to the touch. As they struck each other like two elephants and slapped each other with their palms, the sound that arose was like the harsh clap of thunder. The two fighters were equal to each other in training, strength and energy. O king! Their energy was undiminished and the encounter did not come to any conclusions. O great king! In this way, the fight between them continued for twenty-seven days. They fought each other during the day, but were like friends at night. O king! Once, Vrikodara spoke to his maternal uncle’s son. “O Madhava! I am incapable of defeating Jarasandha in this encounter.” Hari knew about the adversary’s birth and death and about how he had been brought to life by Jara. He told Partha [686] about this and gave him his own energy. He thought about it. Having thought about it, infallible in his insight, he thought about a means of ensuring the death. He indicated this to Bhima by breaking the branch of a tree. [687] Bhima, supreme among strikers and great in his spirit, understood this. He seized the enemy by the feet and brought him down on the ground.

He pressed down on one foot and seized the other one with his arms. Starting with the anus, he tore him apart into two parts, like a large elephant does to the branch of a tree. The subjects saw two parts, each with one foot, thigh, one testicle, one hip, one part of the back, one part of the chest, one collarbone, one arm, one eye, one eyebrow and one ear. When the lord of Magadha was killed, great sounds of lamentation arose. Jaya [688] and Achyuta embraced Bhima and honoured him. The illustrious lord, the creator of all creatures, is immeasurable in his atman. He instated his [689] son, Sahadeva, as the king of Magadha. He freed the kings who had been imprisoned by the king of Magadha.'

Chapter 10(73)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Twenty thousand and eight hundred had been defeated in battles and imprisoned. They emerged from the valley of the mountain. They were dirty and their clothes were filthy. They were thin from hunger. Their mouths were dry. Having been imprisoned, they were suffering. They saw Hari, dark blue like a cloud, dressed in yellow silken garments. He bore the shrivatsa mark and was four-armed. His eyes were red, like the inside of a lotus flower. His beautiful face was pleasant. Earrings in the shape of makaras sparkled. He held a lotus in one hand and a mace, a conch shell and the chakra in the others. He possessed all the signs. He was ornamented with a diadem, a necklace, a belt around his waist and armlets. He was radiant, with the jewel [690] around his neck and with a garland of wild flowers hanging. They seemed to drink him in with their eyes and lick him with their tongues. They seemed to smell him with their noses and embrace him with their arms. They bowed their heads down before his feet and were cleansed of their sins. They were so delighted to see Krishna that all the exhaustion from imprisonment was destroyed. The kings joined their hands in salutation and praised Hrishikesha in these words. The king said, "O god! O lord of the gods! O undecaying one! You remove the afflictions of those who seek refuge with you. O Krishna! We are desperate because of this ter-

rible samsara and have sought shelter with you. O protector! O Madhusudana! We do not censure Magadha. O lord! It is because of your favours that kings are dislodged from their kingdoms. Intoxicated by the prosperity of the kingdom, a king is not restrained and does not know what is good for him. He is confounded by your maya and takes impermanent riches to be permanent. This is like foolish people taking a mirage to be a store of water. Without a sense of discrimination, he takes *vaikarika maya* [691] to possess substance. Earlier, because of prosperity and intoxication, we did not possess sight. Desiring to conquer, we challenged each other. O lord! We were extremely cruel and killed our own subjects. We were indomitable and did not pay heed to your form as death, standing in front of us. O Krishna! Time, your form, is mysterious in its ways and its force is impossible to cross. It dislodged us from our prosperity. Your favours have destroyed our insolence. May we remember your feet. We do not want kingdoms. They are like mirages. They are enjoyed by physical bodies and are always the source of hardships on earth. O lord! After death, nor do we wish to enjoy the fruits of our rituals. Those only sound pleasing to the ear. As we go through samsara on this earth, teach us methods whereby we constantly remember your lotus feet. O Krishna! O Vasudeva! O Hari! O paramatman! O one who destroys the hardships of those who bow down! O Govinda! We bow down before you." The kings, freed from bondage, praised the illustrious one.

'O son! The granter of refuge addressed them in these gentle and compassionate words. The illustrious one said, "O kings! As you have wished, from now on, there will certainly be unflinching devotion in me, the atman who is the lord of everything. O king! It is good fortune that you have arrived at this conclusion and your words are true. I have seen how the intoxication of prosperity and opulence can make men mad. Because of their intoxication, Haihaya, [692] Nahusha, Vena, Naraka and many other lords among gods, daityas and men have been dislodged from their positions of prosperity. Having understood that everything like the body has a beginning and an end, worship me through sacrifices. Use dharma to protect the subjects. You will generate offspring. You will experience happiness and un-

happiness, birth and death. Accept whatever comes and conduct yourselves with your minds on me. Be detached towards everything connected with the body. Find pleasure in your own atmans and be firm in your vows. Immerse your minds completely in me. At the end, you will obtain me, the brahman." Having instructed the kings in this way, the illustrious Krishna, the lord of the universe, employed male and female servants in the task of bathing the kings. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! He made Sahadeva honour the kings and give them appropriate garments, ornaments, garlands and pastes. They were bathed well and ornamented well. They ate excellent food. The kings were honoured with many objects of pleasure, betel leaves and other things. Thus honoured by Mukunda, the kings were resplendent, with dazzling earrings. Released from their hardships, they gleamed like planets at the end of the rainy season. They were mounted on chariots drawn by well-trained horses. They were ornamented with jewels and gold. Thus gratified, with pleasant words, they were sent off to their own countries. They were thus freed from their hardships by the extremely great-souled Krishna. They left, meditating on the lord of the universe and on what he had done. They told their ministers what the great being had done. Attentively, they followed the instructions of the illustrious one.

'Keshava used Bhimasena to kill Jarasandha. Worshipped by Sahadeva, he then left with the two Parthas. Having defeated the enemy, they went to Khandavaprastha [693] and blew on their conch shells. They thus delighted their well-wishers and caused misery to their ill-wishers. Hearing this, the residents of Indraprastha were delighted in their minds. They thought that Magadha had been pacified. The king [694] thought that his wishes had been accomplished. Bhima, Arjuna and Janardana greeted the king. They told him everything about what they had done. Dharmaraja heard about the compassion that Keshava had shown him. He shed tears of joy and because of his love, he was unable to say anything.'

Chapter 10(74)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Thus, King Yudhishthira heard about Jarasandha's death and about the lord Krishna's powers. Rejoicing, he spoke these words. Yudhishthira said, "All the preceptors of the three worlds and all the lords of the worlds bear your instructions on their heads, though it is extremely rare to obtain. O lotus-eyed one! O lord! That you should follow the instructions of miserable ones who pride themselves on being lords is a travesty. [695] You are alone, without a second. You are the brahman. You are the paramatman. Like the sun, your energy is neither increased, nor diminished, by these acts. O invincible one! O Madhava! Those who are devoted to you do not think of 'I', 'mine', 'you' or 'yours'. These differences are perversions of intelligence and are like those of animals." After saying this, when it was time for the sacrifice, with Krishna's permission, Partha [696] engaged brahmanas who knew about the brahman as officiating priests. There were Dvaipayana, Bharadvaja, Sumantu, Goutama, Asita, Vasishtha, Chyavana, Kanva, Maitreya, Kavasha, Trita, Vishvamitra, Vamadeva, Sumati, Jaimini, Kratu, Paila, Parashara, Garga, Vaishampayana, Atharvan, Kashyapa, Dhoumya, Bhargava Rama, [697] Asuri, Vitihotra, Madhuchhanda, Virasena and Akritavarna.

'O king! There were others who were invited—Drona, Bhishma, Kripa and others, Dhritarashtra with his sons and the immensely intelligent Vidura. Brahmanas, kshatriyas, vaishyas, shudras, all the kings and the ministers of the kings came there to witness the sacrifice. At the place where the sacrifice to the gods was to be performed, the brahmanas followed the ordinances and ploughed the ground with golden ploughs. They consecrated the king. As was the case with Varuna's sacrifice in ancient times, all the objects used were made out of gold. Indra and the other guardians of the worlds, Virinchi, Bhava, large numbers of Siddhas, gandharvas, vidyadharas, giant serpents, sages, yakshas, rakshasas, birds, *kinnara*s, charanas, kings and all the wives of the kings were invited and came to the rajasuya of the king who was Pandu's son. They were not surprised, because they thought that this was worthy of someone who was Krishna's devotee. The officiating priests who performed the great king's sacrifice were as radiant

as the gods. The rajasuya was performed with the proper rites, just as the immortals had done it for Prachetas. [698] On the day of *sutya*, [699] the lord of the earth controlled himself and in the proper way, worshipped the officiating priests and the immensely fortunate lords present at the assembly.

'The members in the assembly wondered about who in the assembly should be worshipped first. However, since there were many deserving ones, they could not arrive at a unanimous decision. At this, Sahadeva spoke. "The illustrious lord of the Satvatas is the foremost among those who should be worshipped. He represents all the gods, all the regions, time, wealth and everything else. This universe is his atman. Sacrifices are his atman. Oblations in the fire, mantras, samkhya and yoga are meant for him. He is absolute, without a second. This universe has his atman as its foundation. O those in the assembly! He uses his atman to create, preserve and destroy. It is his favours that give rise to many kinds of tasks—everything beneficial undertaken in this world, characterized as dharma and the others. Therefore, the supreme offering must be given to the great Krishna. Thereby, we will show worship to all creatures and to our own selves. He is in the atman of all creatures and sees himself as no different from them. He is tranquil and complete. If a person desires infinite fruits from his donation, he should give it to Krishna." Sahadeva knew about Krishna's powers. Having said this, he was silent. Hearing this, all the virtuous and excellent people who were present praised these words. The king heard what the brahmanas had said and knew what was in the hearts of those present in the assembly. Delighted and overwhelmed with love, he worshipped Hrishikesha. He bathed his feet. Along with his wife, younger brothers, advisers and members of the family, he happily bore that water, capable of purifying the world, on his head. He offered him yellow silken garments and extremely expensive ornaments. Since his eyes were full of tears, he was incapable of looking at him. When the people saw that he had been honoured, all of them joined their hands in salutation. They prostrated themselves, exclaiming, "We bow down. Victory to you." Flowers were showered down.

'Hearing this, Damaghosha's son [700] arose from his seat. Hearing the description of Krishna's qualities, his anger was aroused. He waved his arms

around. While the illustrious one heard, he fearlessly addressed the assembly in these harsh words. "The sacred texts state that the lord who is time cannot be countered. This is indeed true. The intelligence of the elders has been confused by a child's [701] words. O lords of the assembly! You know who is the most worthy recipient. Do not pay attention to what a child has spoken. All of you have agreed that Krishna should be worshipped. There are lords in the assembly who possess austerities and learning and observe vows. Their knowledge has destroyed their sins. There are supreme rishis who base themselves in the brahman. They are honoured even by the guardians of the worlds. Passing over all of them, how can a cowherd, the worst of his lineage, be offered this honour? This is like giving a cake to a crow. He doesn't possess a varna, an ashrama, or noble lineage. He is outside the pale of all dharma. He does what he wants and is devoid of qualities. How can such a person deserve to be worshipped? Yayati cursed this lineage and since then, all virtuous people have shunned them. They are always engaged in the futile pursuit of drinking. How can such a person deserve to be worshipped? They have abandoned the regions frequented by *brahmana rishi*s. They are in a place where the radiance of brahmanas does not exist. They have resorted to a fortification in the ocean. Like bandits, they oppress the subjects." Since his store of everything auspicious had been destroyed, he uttered many other inauspicious words. However, just as a lion does not react to the cries of a female jackal, the illustrious one said nothing.

'The ones present in the assembly found it impossible to listen to the condemnation of the illustrious one. They covered their ears and left, angrily cursing the king of Chedi. If a person hears criticism of the illustrious one or his devotees, he certainly falls downwards and is deprived of all his good deeds. Pandu's sons became angry. Along with the Matsyas, the Kekayas and the Srinjayas, they stood up and raised their weapons, desiring to kill Shishupala. However, Chedi wasn't scared. He seized a sword and a shield. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! In that assembly, he reprimanded the kings who were on Krishna's side. Himself angry, the illustrious one arose and restrained them. Using his sharp-edged chakra, he severed the head of

the enemy who was descending on him. When Shishupala was killed, a great uproar arose. Desiring to save their lives, the kings who were on his side fled. As all the creatures looked on, a radiance that was like a meteor dislodged from the firmament, arose from Chedi's body and entered Vasudeva. Extending across three births, [702] because his intelligence had been firm in enmity towards him, he meditated on him and obtained union with him. One's sentiments are responsible for what one becomes.

'Following the prescribed rites, the universal emperor [703] gave copious amounts of dakshina to the officiating priests and the assistant priests. Having honoured everyone, he bathed. [704] Krishna, the lord of all the lords of yoga, ensured that the king's sacrifice was successfully accomplished. Requested by his well-wishers, he resided there for a few months. Thereafter, though the king did not wish this, he took his leave. With his wives and advisers, Devaki's son returned to his own city. In great detail, I have described to you the account of the two residents of Vaikuntha. [705] Because of the curse of the brahmanas, they had to be repeatedly born. When King Yudhishthira bathed himself at the end of rajasuya, in the assembly of the brahmanas and the kshatriyas, he was as resplendent as the king of the gods. All the gods, humans and those who roamed around in the sky were honoured by the king. Praising Krishna and the sacrifice, they happily returned to their own abodes. The only exception was the wicked Duryodhana, the bane in the lineage of the Kurus. He was like Kali. [706] Witnessing the increased opulence of Pandu's son, he could not tolerate it. If a person chants about Vishnu's deed, the slaying of Chedi and the others, [707] the freeing of the kings and the sacrifice, he is freed from all his sins.'

Chapter 10(75)

The king said, 'Witnessing the great festivities at King Ajatashatru's rajasuya sacrifice, all the assembled kings, rishis and gods rejoiced. O brahmana! Duryodhana was the exception there. O illustrious one! That is what we have heard. Please explain the reason for this.'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'At your great-souled grandfather's rajasuya sacrifice, all the relatives were bound to him by love and served him. Bhima was in charge of the kitchen, Suyodhana was in charge of the treasury, Sahadeva was given the task of welcoming people and Nakula was engaged in procuring the required objects. Jishnu [708] served the seniors, while Krishna washed the feet. Drupada's daughter served food and the great-minded Karna gave the gifts. In that great sacrifice, Yuyudhana, Vikarna, Hardikya, Vidura and others, Bhuri and other sons of Bahlika and Santardana and the others had specific tasks earmarked for them. O Indra among kings! Wishing to bring pleasure to the king, they did all this. The officiating priests, the assistant priests, learned ones and well-wishers were honoured with pleasant words, objects of worship and dakshina. When Chedi entered the feet of the lord of the Satvatas, the avabhritha bath was performed in the heavenly river. [709] At the festivities connected with avabhritha, many kinds of musical instruments were sounded—drums, conch shells, kettledrums, tabors, larger drums and trumpets. Cheerful female dancers danced. Groups of singers sang. The sound of veenas, flutes and clapping of the hands touched the firmament. Wearing golden necklaces and with well-ornamented soldiers, the kings emerged. [710] They had colourful flags and standards, with large elephants, chariots and horses. Placing the one performing the sacrifice [711] at the forefront, the Yadu, Srinjaya, Kamboja, Kuru, Kekaya and Kosala soldiers made the earth tremble. The assistant priests, the officiating priests and the best among brahmanas repeatedly chanted about the brahman. The gods, rishis, ancestors and gandharvas uttered words of praise and showered down flowers. There were men and women, ornamented well with fragrances, garlands, ornaments and garments. They sported, smeared each other and sprinkled each other with many kinds of liquids. The men smeared the courtesans with oil, curds, fragrances, turmeric and thick layers of kunkuma. They were smeared back in turn. To directly witness, the wives of the kings emerged, protected by male guards. [712] They were like goddesses in the sky, astride the best of vimanas. When their maternal cousins [713] and friends sprinkled them, their radiant faces bloomed and they smiled bashfully. Using syringes, [714] they also sprinkled their brothers-in-

law and friends. Their clothes got wet, revealing their limbs, breasts, thighs and waists. In their eagerness, their hair was dishevelled and the garlands were dislodged from the braids of their hair. Through these charming pastimes, they agitated the minds of those who were impure. The king was astride a chariot yoked to well-trained horses with golden harnesses. Along with his wives, he was as radiant as the king of sacrifices, [715] surrounded by various rituals. The officiating priests made him perform *patni-samyaja* [716] and avabhritha. Along with the drums of humans, the drums of the gods were sounded. Gods, rishis, ancestors and humans showered down flowers. Thereafter, men from all the varnas and ashramas bathed there. They were instantly cleansed of all their sins, including great sins. The king donned two new silk garments and ornamented himself. He honoured officiating priests, assistant priests, brahmanas and the distressed with garments and ornaments. The king was always devoted to Narayana. He honoured relatives, kin, kings, friends, well-wishers and all the others. With jewels, earrings, garlands, headdresses, jackets, girdles and extremely expensive necklaces, all the people were as radiant as gods. The beautiful faces of the women were resplendent because of earrings and their shining locks of hair. They were attired in golden girdles. O king! The extremely virtuous officiating priests, assistant priests who knew about the brahman, brahmanas, kshatriyas, vaishyas, shudras, the assembled kings, gods, rishis, creatures and guardians of the worlds, along with their followers, were honoured. After this, they sought leave and returned to their own abodes. Just as a mortal person is not satisfied with drinking amrita, they praised the great rajasuya sacrifice of the royal sage who was Hari's servant and were not satisfied.

'King Yudhishthira was afflicted at the prospect of being separated from his well-wishers, matrimonial allies, relatives and Krishna. Out of his love, he restrained them. O dear one! To do what would bring him pleasure, the illustrious one resided there for some time. However, he sent the Yadu heroes, Samba and the others, to Kushasthali. [717] In this way, the king who was Dharma's son accomplished his desires through Krishna's help. He lost all his anxiety. It was as if he had crossed a great ocean that was extremely difficult to cross.

‘On one occasion, Duryodhana witnessed the prosperity of the inner quarters. He was tormented by this and by the greatness of the rajasuya performed by the one who had Achyuta in his soul. There, [718] the creator of the universe [719] had fashioned all the many kinds of resplendent prosperity of Indras among men, Indras among daityas and Indras among the gods. The daughter of King Drupada served her husbands. The king of the Kurus [720] was attracted to her and his heart was tormented. At that time, the thousands of wives of the lord of Madhu [721] also resided there. Because of their heavy hips, they walked slowly. Charming anklets tinkled on their legs. They possessed beautiful waists. Their necklaces were red because of the kunkuma from their breasts. Their earrings moved and their thick locks of hair enhanced the beauty of their faces. On one occasion, the emperor who was Dharma’s son was seated in the assembly hall constructed by Maya. He was surrounded by his followers and relatives and by Krishna, who was like his own eye. With Parameshthi’s [722] prosperity, he was praised by the bandis. O king! Surrounded by his brothers, the proud Duryodhana would not be restrained. With a diadem on his head and a sword in his hand, he angrily abused them [723] and entered. He was confounded by Maya’s maya. Taking the floor to be water, he gathered up the ends of his garments. In another place, taking the water to be the floor, he was bewildered and fell into the water. Seeing this, Bhima, the women and other kings laughed at him. O dear one! This was despite the king [724] trying to restrain them. However, it was sanctioned by Krishna. He was ashamed and his face blazed with rage. Though he was silent, he exited and left for Gajasahvya. The virtuous ones raised great lamentations of “Alas!” Ajatashatru’s mind was dejected. Since the illustrious one wished to remove the earth’s burden, he was silent. It was his glance that had led to the delusion. [725] O king! I have thus described to you what you had asked me about, about how Suyodhana’s evil intentions increased in the course of the great rajasuya sacrifice.’

Chapter 10(76)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O king! Now hear about another one of Krishna's extraordinary deeds. In his pastimes, he assumed a human form and killed the lord of Soubha. Shalva was Shishupala's friend. When he came for Rukmini's marriage, he, Jarasandha and the others were defeated by the Yadus in the encounter. In the hearing of all the kings, Shalva took a pledge. "Behold my manliness. I will make the earth empty of Yadavas." Having taken this pledge, the foolish one worshipped the lord and god, Pashupati. [726] Every day, the king only subsisted on a fistful of dust. [727] Uma's illustrious consort is easily pleased. [728] Shalva had sought refuge with him and at the end of a year, he asked him to choose a boon. He asked for a vehicle that would be able to go anywhere at will and would be impenetrable by gods, asuras, humans, gandharvas and rakshasas. The Vrishnis would find it terrifying. Girisha agreed and instructed Maya, the conqueror of enemy cities. He [729] constructed such a city, made out of iron, and gave it to Shalva. He obtained that vehicle, which was enveloped in darkness. It could travel anywhere at will and was impossible to assail. Remembering the enmity that the Vrishnis had engendered, Shalva used it to go to Dvaravati.

'O bull among the Bharata lineage! With an extremely large army, Shalva laid siege. He destroyed all the groves and gardens in the city. He showered down weapons from that supreme vimana on the turrets, gates, palaces, mansions, terraces and pleasure gardens. Rocks, trees, bolts of thunder, snakes and hailstones rained down. There were fierce whirlwinds and the directions were enveloped in dust. O king! Krishna's city was thus severely afflicted by Soubha. There was no peace. It was as if the earth had been attacked by Tripura. [730] The illustrious Pradyumna saw how his own subjects were suffering and told them, "Do not be scared." The brave and immensely illustrious one mounted a chariot. Satyaki, Charudeshna, Samba, Akrura and his younger brothers, Hardikya, Bhanuvinda, Gada, Shuka, Sarana and other great archers, leaders of arrays of charioteers, emerged. They were armoured and protected by chariots, elephants, horses and infantry. A battle ensued between Shalva's forces and the Yadus. It was tumultuous, like that between the asuras and the gods, and it made the body hair stand up. With

his divine weapons, Rukmini's son [731] destroyed the maya of the lord of Soubha, just as the hot rays of the sun destroy the darkness of the night in an instant. He used twenty-five gold-tufted, iron-tipped and well-jointed arrows to pierce the one who was protecting Shalva's standard. He struck Shalva with one hundred arrows and pierced each of his soldiers with one each. He pierced each leader with ten arrows and the mounts with three arrows each. Witnessing the great-souled Pradyumna's great and wonderful deed, all the soldiers, on one's own side and on the adversary's side, applauded. However, it [732] had been fashioned by Maya and was full of maya. It would appear as one and as many. It would be visible and would not be visible. The enemy found it impossible to determine where it was. It was sometimes on the ground and sometimes, it was in the sky. Sometimes it was on the summit of a mountain and sometimes it floated on water. Soubha whirled around like a circle of fire and was never in a single spot. Wherever, Soubha, Shalva and his soldiers appeared, the leaders of the Satvatas directed their arrows at those spots. Shalva, his city and his soldiers were thus confounded by the enemy and suffered. The arrows were like the fire or the sun to the touch. They were as invincible as virulent serpents. The valiant ones among the Vrishnis were also severely afflicted by the floods of weapons released by Shalva's army. However, desiring to conquer both the worlds, [733] they did not abandon the field of battle and remained in their respective positions. Shalva's adviser, named Dyuman, had earlier suffered at Pradyumna's hands. The powerful one struck him with a heavy iron club and roared loudly. Pradyumna was a scorcher of enemies, but his chest was shattered by the club. His charioteer, Daruka's son, [734] knew about dharma and took him away from the field of battle. Krishna's son recovered his senses in an instant and told the charioteer, "Alas! O charioteer! Taking me away from the field of battle is a contemptible act. With my exception, it has never been heard that a person born in the lineage of the Yadus has withdrawn from the field of battle. I have now been tainted by a charioteer whose intelligence is like that of a eunuch. When I meet my fathers, Rama and Keshava, what will I tell them? When they ask me about myself, will I ask them to pardon me because I withdrew from the field of battle? It is evi-

dent that my sisters-in-law will laugh at me and say, 'O brave one! Tell us. Tell us about how the enemy turned you into a eunuch in the battle. Please tell us how this happened.'" The charioteer replied, "O lord! O one with a long life! I did this because I knew about dharma. In times of difficulty, the charioteer must protect the warrior and the warrior must protect the charioteer. Knowing about this, I took you away from the field of battle. You were struck by the enemy's club. You were hurt and lost your consciousness."'

Chapter 10(77)

Shri-Shuka said, 'He [735] touched water, armoured himself and picked up his bow. He told the charioteer, "Please take me to the brave Dyuman's side." Dyuman was slaughtering his soldiers. However, Rukmini's son smiled and repulsed him, piercing him back with eight iron arrows. He struck the four horses with four arrows and his charioteer with one. With two arrows, he severed his bow and standard. With one more arrow, he severed his head. Gada, Satyaki, Samba and the others killed the soldiers of the lord of Soubha. With their heads severed, the torsos of all those in Soubha fell down into the ocean. Thus, the Yadus and those on Shalva's side slew each other. The tumultuous and fierce battle continued for twenty-seven nights. [736]

'Invited by Dharma's son, Krishna had gone to Indraprastha. The rajasuya had been concluded and Shishupala had been killed. He took his leave from the aged ones in the Kuru lineage, the sages and Pritha and her sons. As he left for Dvaravati, he witnessed terrible portents."I have come here with my noble elder brother. The kings who are on Chedi's side must certainly have attacked my city." He arrived and saw the carnage caused among those on his own side. He arranged for the protection of the city and saw Soubha and King Shalva. Keshava told Daruka, "O charioteer! Quickly take my chariot to Shalva's presence. The king of Soubha resorts to maya, but you need not be scared on that account." Thus addressed and urged, Daruka drove the chariot and entered. Everyone, on one's own side and on

the adversary's side, saw the standard with Aruna's younger brother. [737] With his forces almost exhausted, the lord Shalva noticed Krishna. In the encounter, he hurled a javelin towards Krishna's charioteer and it emitted a terrible roar. It swiftly descended from the sky, like a giant meteor blazing the directions. With his arrows, Shouri shattered it into one hundred fragments. He pierced him with sixteen arrows. As Soubha roamed around in the sky, he struck it with torrents of arrows, like the rays of the sun filling up the sky. Shalva struck Shouri, the wielder of the Sharnga bow, on his left arm, holding the Sharnga bow. Thus pierced, the Sharnga bow fell down from his hand and this was extraordinary. Seeing this, great sounds of lamentation arose from the beings who were there. The lord of Soubha roared and spoke to Janardana. "O foolish one! While we looked on, you abducted the wife of a friend who was like a brother. [738] While he was distracted in the middle of the assembly, you killed my friend. You pride yourself on being invincible. If you remain in front of me today, with my sharp arrows, I will convey you to the region from where there is no return." The illustrious one replied, "O wicked one! Why are you boasting in vain? You do not see Death, standing near you. Brave ones exhibit their manliness. They do not speak a lot." Saying this, the illustrious one struck Shalva on the collarbone with a club that was terrible in its force. He wavered and started to vomit blood. As soon as the club was withdrawn, Shalva instantly vanished from the spot. At that instant, a man arrived and bowed his head down before Achyuta. Bowing down and weeping, he spoke these words. "I have been sent by Devaki. O Krishna! O mighty-armed one! You are devoted to your parents. O Krishna! Like an animal bound by a butcher, your father has been bound and has been taken away by Shalva." Krishna heard this unpleasant news. Since he was following the conduct of a human, his mind was filled with distress and compassion. Because of his love, he spoke like an ordinary person. "The fearless Rama is invincible and cannot be defeated by the gods or the asuras. How could the insignificant Shalva have defeated him and taken my father away? Destiny is powerful." When Govinda said this, the king of Soubha presented himself again. Apparently leading Vasudeva, he addressed Krishna in these words. "This is your fa-

ther, who gave birth to you. It is because of him that you are alive. While you look on, I will kill him. O foolish one! Save him if you can." Full of maya, he abused him in this way and used his sword to sever Anakadundubhi's head. Taking it, he entered Soubha, which was stationed in the sky.

'He [739] is full of knowledge. However, because of affection towards his own relative, for an instant, he was overwhelmed by ordinary feelings. But the great one comprehended that this was the maya of asuras. Developed by Maya, Shalva was merely using it. Now alert, Achyuta did not see the messenger, or his father's body, on the field of battle, as if he had woken up from a dream. He saw his enemy roaming around in the sky and got ready to destroy Soubha. O royal sage! There are some rishis who are inconsistent in their reasoning. Indeed, they do not remember what they themselves have said and are contradictory in their statements. Sorrow, delusion, affection and fear are created by ignorance. How can these exist in him? His jnana and vijnana are infinite. His powers are infinite. By serving at his feet, people earn for themselves knowledge about the atman. They thereby destroy the mistaken identification of the atman, [740] which has existed right from the beginning. They obtain union with the infinite lord. He is the supreme destination of the virtuous. How can he suffer from delusion? [741] Shalva energetically struck him with torrents of weapons. However, invincible in his valour, Shouri struck him back with arrows. He pierced and shattered his armour, his bow and the jewel on his head. Using a club, he shattered the enemy's Soubha. The club wielded by Krishna's hand shattered it into one thousand fragments and it fell down. Abandoning it, Shalva descended on the ground. Raising a club, he quickly rushed towards Achyuta. As he rushed forward, he [742] used a broad-headed arrow to sever his arm, along with the club. To slay Shalva, he then raised his wonderful chakra, which resembled the sun at the time of universal destruction. He was resplendent and dazzled like the sun atop Mount Udaya. [743] He was full of maya, but Hari severed his head with that, along with the earrings and the diadem, exactly as Purandara had done to Vritra with the vajra. Great sounds of lamentation arose from amidst the men. [744] The wicked one fell down and the club destroyed Soubha. O king! Large numbers of gods sounded their drums in

the firmament. Desiring to avenge the deaths of his friends, Dantavakra angrily attacked.'

Chapter 10(78)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Shishupala, Shalva and the evil-minded Poundraka had left for the world hereafter. He [745] wished to display his affection towards those who had died. O great king! He advanced angrily on foot, with a club in his hand. He was alone and the earth trembled from his strides. The great being showed himself. On seeing him advance, Krishna quickly got down from his chariot and seized a club. He countered him, just as the shoreline holds the ocean back. The indomitable Karusha [746] raised his club and spoke to Mukunda. "This is good fortune. It is fortunate that you have come within the range of my vision today. O Krishna! You are the son of my maternal uncle. [747] But you have injured my friends and wish to kill me too. O foolish one! Therefore, I will slay you with this club, which is like the vajra. O ignorant one! I am devoted to my friends. In this way, I will repay my debt towards my friends. I will kill you, because you are like an enemy in the form a relative. You are like a disease that is roaming around in the body." He afflicted Krishna with these harsh words. Then, like an elephant that has been urged with a goad, he struck him on the head with the club and roared loudly, like a lion. Though he was struck in the field of battle with the club, the extender of the Yadu lineage did not waver. With his large and heavy Koumadaki [748] club, he struck him between the breasts. His heart was shattered from the blow of the club and he began to vomit blood from his mouth. His hair was dishevelled. With his arms and legs stretched out, he fell down on the ground, having lost his life. O king! While all the creatures looked on, an extraordinary and subtle light arose and entered Krishna, just as it had done at the time of Chedi's death. Viduratha was his brother and he was overwhelmed with grief on account of his brother. Sighing heavily, he advanced to kill him, holding a sword and a shield. O Indra among kings! As he descended, Krishna used his chakra, sharp at the edges, to sever his

head, along with his diadem and his earrings. Thus, he destroyed Soubha, Shalva, Dantavakra and his younger brother, who were invincible to others, gods and humans alike. Sages, Siddhas, gandharvas, vidyadharas, giant serpents, apsaras, large numbers of ancestors, yakshas, kinnaras and charanas sang about his victory and showered down flowers. Surrounded by the brave ones among the Vrishnis, he entered the ornamented city. The illustrious Krishna, the lord of the universe and the lord of yoga, is victorious in this fashion. Only those with the vision of animals think that he has sometimes been defeated.

'Rama heard that preparations were under way for a battle between the Kurus and the Pandavas. Since he was truly neutral, he left, intending to bathe at the tirthas. He bathed in Prabhasa [749] and satisfied gods, rishis and humans. Along with brahmanas, he followed the course of the Sarasvati from its mouth to its origin. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! He went to Prithudaka, [750] Bindusaras, [751] Tritakupa, [752] Sudarshana, [753] Vishala, [754] Brahmatirtha, [755] Chakratirtha, [756] and the place where the Sarasvati flows in an eastward direction. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! He travelled along the banks of the Yamuna and the Ganga. He then went to Naimisha, where the rishis were performing a sacrifice. The sages had been performing this sacrifice for a long time. On seeing him, as is proper, they honoured him. They stood up, bowed and worshipped him. Thus worshipped, along with his companions, he accepted a seat. However, he noticed that Romaharshana, the great rishi's [757] disciple, remained seated. This son of a suta did not stand up. He did not bow down and join his hands in salutation. He remained seated on a seat that was higher than that of the brahmanas. On seeing this, Madhava was enraged."He has been born from a *pratiloma* marriage. [758] However, this evil-minded person seats himself above brahmanas and above all of us who are protectors of dharma. Having been a disciple of the illustrious rishi, [759] he has studied a lot—Itihasa, the Puranas and all the texts of dharma. However, he is not self-controlled. Nor is he humble. He prides himself on being learned, but in vain. There are no qualities in him. He is like an actor who has been unable to control his mind. This is the reason why I have assumed an avatara in this world. I will kill

the ones who bear aloft the banner of dharma, since they are greater sinners." [760] Having said this, the illustrious one refrained from killing the wicked. [761] With a blade of *kusha* grass in his hand, the lord struck him. However, destiny took over and he was killed.

'Distressed in their minds, all the sages lamented, "Alas! Alas!" They told Samkarshana, "O god! O lord! You have performed an act of adharma. O descendant of the Yadu lineage! Until the sacrifice was over, it is we who gave him the seat meant for a brahmana, a long life and freedom from physical harm. What you have unwittingly done is like the killing of a brahmana. But you are the lord of yoga and the controller. Therefore, the injunction doesn't apply to you. O purifier of the worlds! Nevertheless, without being urged by others, you must perform an act of atonement for the sin of killing a brahmana. This must be done as an example to the world." The illustrious one replied, "Desiring to show compassion to people, I will perform an act of atonement for the killing. But first tell me about the recommended ritual that has to be performed. Tell me what you have wished for him—a long lifespan, strength of the senses and so on. I will ensure that through my yoga maya." The rishis said, "O Rama! Arrange it so that the valour of your weapon, the inevitability of death and our pledge, all remain true." The illustrious one replied, "The instruction of the Vedas is that one's own self is born as a son. Therefore, let his son be the one who expounds. [762] As you have promised, let him possess a long lifespan and strength of the senses. O best among the sages! Tell me what else you wish for. I will accomplish it. O learned ones! Please think about the atonement for something I have done unwittingly." The rishis said, "There is a terrible danava named Balvala and he is the son of Ilvala. He comes here on the day of the new moon and the full moon and pollutes our sacrifice. O Dasharha! Kill that wicked one. It will be a great service. He showers down pus, blood, excrement, urine, liquor and meat. After that, you must control yourself and travel around Bharatavarsha for twelve months, bathing in the tirthas. You will then be purified."'

Chapter 10(79)

Shri-Shuka said, 'When the next day of the full moon arrived, there was a terrible dust storm. O king! There was a fierce wind and a foul stench in every direction. Balvala devised and showered down inauspicious objects on the sacrificial arena. He then appeared, wielding a trident. He was gigantic in form, like a mass of black collyrium. His hair, beard and moustache were like hot copper. His face had terrible teeth and furrowed eyebrows. On seeing him, Rama remembered his club, which was capable of shattering the soldiers of the enemy, and his plough, used to chastise daityas. These immediately presented themselves. Balvala was roaming around in the sky and with the tip of his plough, Bala dragged him, angrily striking the one who injured brahmanas on the head with the club. His forehead was shattered and blood started to flow out. Emitting a roar of agony, he fell down on the ground, like a red mountain that had been struck by the vajra. [763] The sages praised Rama and pronounced their infallible benedictions over him. They sprinkled water on him, just as the gods had done to the slayer of Vritra. They gave Rama divine garments, other celestial ornaments and a vaijayanti garland made out of lotuses that did not fade, Shri's abode.

'With their permission and along with the brahmanas, he went to Koushiki [764] and bathed there. He then went to the lake where the Sarayu originates. [765] He followed the course of the Sarayu and reached Prayaga. He bathed there and satisfied gods and others. He then went to Pulaha's hermitage. [766] He bathed in Gomati and Gandaki and bathed in Vipasha and Shona. He went to Gaya and worshipped the ancestors there. He next went to the confluence of the Ganga with the ocean. He touched the water in Mount Mahendra. Having seen Rama, [767] he honoured him. He went to the seven tributaries of the Godavari, Vena, Pampa and Bhimarathi. Having seen Skanda, Rama went to Shrishaila, where Girisha resides. The lord saw the extremely sacred Mount Venkata, in the Dravida region. He went to Kamakoshni, the city of Kanchi and the River Kaveri. He went to the extremely sacred place known as Shriranga, where Hari resides. He went to Mount Rishabha, Hari's region. This is like the Mathura of the south. He went to the bridge across the ocean, [768] the place that destroys the greatest of sins.

There, the one who wields the plough as a weapon gave brahmanas ten thousand cows. He went to Kritamala, Tamraparni and the *kulachala*, Malaya. [769] Agastya was seated there and he bowed down to him and honoured him. After receiving his benedictions and taking his leave, he went to the southern ocean. There, he saw the goddess Durga, known as Kanya. [770] After this, he went to Phalguna and the excellent lake known as Panchapsara, where Vishnu is present. [771] Having touched the water and bathed there, he gave away ten thousand cows. The illustrious one then travelled through the lands of Kerala and Trigarta. [772] He went to Shiva's kshetra, known as Gokarna. Dhurjati [773] is present there. Bala saw Arya, who resides on an island, and went to Shurparaka. [774] Having touched the waters of the rivers Tapi, Payoshni and Nirvindya, he went to Dandaka. [775] Entering, he went to the Reva, where the city of Mahishmati is. [776] He touched the water in Manutirtha and returned to Prabhasa again.

'He heard the brahmanas conversing about the battle between the Kurus and the Pandavas, in which, all the kings had been killed. He thought that the earth's burden had been removed. The descendant of the Yadu lineage desired to stop Bhima and Duryodhana from fighting with clubs on that battlefield of destruction. He went there. Seeing him, Yudhishthira, Krishna, Arjuna and the twins honoured him. They wanted to ask, "Why have you come here?"But were silent. He saw that those two were angrily roaming around, executing wonderful motions, with clubs in their hands, wishing to be victorious. He told them, "O king! O Vrikodara! Both of you are brave and equal in strength. I think that one of you is superior in strength, while the other is superior in learning. [777] Both of you are equal to each other in valour. Therefore, I do not see either of you as being victorious. Stop this futile encounter." O king! Though his words were full of meaning, because they were firm in enmity, they did not accept his words. They remembered the evil acts that they had done to each other and they wicked words they had used against each other. Deciding that this was because of destiny, Rama went to Dvaravati. Ugrasena and his other relatives were delighted that he had returned. He again went to Naimisha, where the rishis were engaged in performing a sacrifice. Since he was himself the embodiment of all

sacrifices, they rejoiced. He renounced everything to do with the conflict. The illustrious lord bestowed pure vijnana on them. Through this, they saw him, the atman of the universe, in their own atmans, and saw the universe in their own selves. Along with his relatives and well-wishers and with his wife, [778] he had the avabhritha bath. He attired himself in excellent garments and ornamented himself well. Radiant in his own resplendence, he was like the moon. Bala was full of strength and performed such innumerable feats. He is infinite and immeasurable. It is because of maya that he appears as mortal. If a person chants Rama's extraordinary feats and deeds in the morning and in the evening, he is loved by the infinite Vishnu.'

Chapter 10(80)

The king said, 'O illustrious one! O lord! The great-souled Mukunda is infinite in his valour. We wish to hear about his other acts of valour. O brahmana! Uttamashloka's account is excellent. If a person is accomplished and is dissatisfied with the path of desire, how can he cease to be interested in repeatedly hearing about these? If words chant about his qualities, they represent true speech. If hands undertake his work, they are true hands. If the mind remembers him, it is a true mind. He is present in mobile and immobile objects. If the ears hear about this sacred accounts, they are true ears. If a head bows down to both his forms, [779] it is a true head. If they see the god, they are true eyes. If limbs always honour the water that has washed the feet of Vishnu's devotees, those are true limbs.'

Suta said, 'Badarayana's illustrious son was thus asked by Vishnurata. [780] With his heart immersed in the illustrious Vasudeva, he replied.'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'Krishna had a brahmana friend and he was excellent in his knowledge about the brahman. He was not interested in pursuing the objects of the senses. He had conquered his senses and was tranquil in his atman. Voluntarily, he followed the conduct of a householder. He could not dress well and was hungry and lean. His wife also suffered in that way. She was devoted to her husband, but her face was wan. She was suffering from

poverty. Trembling, she went to her husband and said, "O brahmana! Isn't it true that the illustrious one is your friend? He is the consort of Shri herself. The illustrious bull among Satvatas is the refuge of brahmanas. O immensely fortunate one! He provides shelter to all those who are virtuous. Your family is suffering. Go to him and he will give you plenty of riches. The lord of Bhojas, Vrishnis and Andhakas is now in Dvaravati. If a person remembers his lotus feet, he gives his own self away. He is the preceptor of the universe. Why will he not confer the desired artha and kama on someone who worships him?" The wife repeatedly entreated the brahmana in many kinds of ways. He thought, "To see Uttamashloka is itself a great gain." Thinking this, he made up his mind to go. He asked, "O fortunate one! Is there anything in the house that can be given to him as a gift?" From brahmanas, she begged four handfuls of parched and flattened rice. She tied this up in a piece of cloth and gave it to her husband as a gift. Accepting this, the foremost among brahmanas left for Dvaraka. He kept thinking, "How will I be able to meet Krishna?" With other brahmanas, he passed through three checkpoints and three gates, which are difficult to cross. He passed in front of the houses of the Andhakas and the Vrishnis, who were devoted to dharma.

'The brahmana then entered an opulent house of one of Hari's sixteen thousand queens. When he entered it, it was as if he had obtained the bliss of attaining the brahman. Achyuta was seated on his beloved's couch and saw him from a distance. Rejoicing, he immediately stood up and embraced him in his two arms. He was extremely delighted at having been able to touch the body of his beloved friend, the brahmana rishi. The lotus-eyed one shed tears of joy from his eyes. He made him sit on his own couch and gave him objects of worship. O king! The illustrious one, the purifier of the worlds, brought water for washing his feet and sprinkled that water on his own head. He smeared him with divine fragrances, sandalwood, aloe and kunkuma. Having honoured him, he gave him betel leaf and a cow and spoke words of welcome. The brahmana's garments were dirty. He was emaciated and his veins protruded. The queen [781] herself served him and fanned him with a whisk. The people in the inner quarters witnessed

Krishna's unblemished deed. They were astounded at the great honour and affection that was being shown towards an *avadhuta*. [782]"What are the auspicious acts that this beggar avadhhuta has performed? He is devoid of prosperity. In this world, he is condemned as someone who is inferior. This one is revered as the preceptor of the three worlds. He is Shri's abode. He has abandoned Shri on her couch and has embraced him, like an elder brother." O king! They grasped each other by the hand and conversed about the charming incidents, when they had resided in their teacher's household together. [783]

'The illustrious one asked, "O brahmana! You know about dharma. After having received the instruction from the preceptor and giving him the dakshina, did you return and marry a wife who is your equal? Even though you are generally engaged in household affairs, your intelligence is not agitated by desire. O learned one! You do not find any pleasure in wealth. That is known to me. There are some who are like me. They give up all desire from their minds and perform action. For the sake of being an example to people, they abandon all the natural propensities that have a divine origin. O brahmana! Do you remember our residence in our preceptor's house? It is in this way that a dvija [784] learns what is there to know and achieves that which is beyond darkness. O dear one! The first guru is the one from whom one obtains birth in this world. [785] Next is the one through whom one becomes a dvija. [786] Last is the one through whom a person in different ashramas obtains knowledge and he is like my own self. O brahmana! In this world, in different varnas and ashramas, those who accept my words as a guru are the ones who know what is good for them. They cross the ocean of life easily. I am in the atmans of all beings. I am not as satisfied through sacrifices, noble birth, austerities and self-control as I am through service towards the guru. O brahmana! Do you remember what happened when we resided with our guru? On one occasion, we were urged by our guru's wife to go and fetch some kindling. O brahmana! We entered a large forest and there was an extremely large and unseasonal storm. It was fierce and harsh and there was thunder. With the sun having set, all the directions were enveloped in darkness. Since everything was covered in water, nothing could be discerned,

the high ground or the low. We were there, struck repeatedly by the fierce wind and water. There was a deluge of water everywhere. In the forest, we could not determine the directions. Suffering, we wandered around, holding each other by the hand. Our guru, Sandipani, got to know. When the sun arose, he searched for us and found us, his disciples, in that distressed state. "Alas, my sons! You have suffered from a great deal of misery for our sake. All beings love their own selves the most. However, devoted to me, you ignored that. This is the task of all good disciples, repaying the debt due to the guru. With pure sentiments, everything, including one's own self, must be surrendered to the guru. O best among dvijas! I am satisfied with you. May all your desires come true. In this world and in the next, may the mantras never leave you." [787] While we resided in our guru's house, there were many other incidents. It is through a guru's favours that a man becomes complete and obtains tranquility.

'The brahmana replied, "O god of the gods! O preceptor of the universe! You are one who accomplishes all desires. Since my residence with the guru was with you, what could we possibly not accomplish? O lord! In the form of the mantras, your body is the brahman. You are the field where everything beneficial is sown. That you resided with the guru is itself a matter of great wonder."'

Chapter 10(81)

Shri-Shuka said, 'In this way, Hari conversed with that best of brahmanas. He knew about what was in the minds of all creatures. He smiled and spoke to him. The illustrious Krishna was devoted to brahmanas. He joked with his dearest brahmana. The one who is truly the destination of all virtuous people glanced at him with affectionate eyes.

'The illustrious one said, "O brahmana! What gift have you brought me from your house? A trifling gift offered by a devotee satisfies me, but not a great deal of gifts by a person who is not devoted to me. If a person devot-

edly controls himself and offers me a leaf, a flower, a fruit or some water, I accept it."' [788]

Shri-Shuka continued, 'O king! Though the brahmana was addressed in this way by Shri's lord, he was ashamed and did not give the parched and flattened rice. His face was cast downwards. He is the direct witness in the atmans of all creatures. He knew the reason for his coming there. He thought, "Desiring riches, this one has never served me earlier. My friend wants to do what will bring pleasure to his wife, who is devoted to her husband. That is the reason he has come to me. I will grant him riches that even the immortals find extremely difficult to obtain." The parched and flattened rice was tied up in a rag inside the brahmana's clothes. Thinking this, he himself snatched it and asked, "What is this? O friend! You have brought me this. O dear one! I love this a lot. This parched and flattened rice will satisfy me and the entire universe." Saying this, he ate a handful. As he was about to eat the second handful, devoted to Parameshthi, Shri seized him by the hand. [789] "O atman of the universe! This is sufficient to grant him all kinds of wealth in this world and in the next. You are the reason behind a man's satisfaction." After eating and drinking, the brahmana happily spent the night in Achyuta's house. He thought that he had gone to heaven. O son! Next morning, he left for his own house. He was delighted. For a part of the way, he was followed by the creator of the universe, the one who is his own source of bliss. He had not obtained riches from Krishna. Nor had he asked for them himself. He was satisfied with only having met him. However, as he returned to his own home, he was embarrassed. "He treats brahmanas like divinities. I have seen how devoted he is to brahmanas. The one who has the radiant Lakshmi on his chest has embraced a person like me, the poorest of the poor. Who am I? I am poor and wicked. Krishna is Shri's abode. I am a *brahma-bandhu*. [790] Nevertheless, he has embraced me in his arms. Like a brother, he made me sit on his couch, where his beloved had sat. Since I was exhausted, the queen fanned with a whisk made of yak hair in her hand. He served me in a supreme way, massaging my feet and doing other things. He treats brahmanas like divinities. Like a god, I was worshipped by that god of gods. Worshipping his feet is the cause behind

obtaining heaven, emancipation for men, the prosperity of earth and rasatala and all the kinds of siddhi. [791] 'If this person without riches obtains riches, he will become intoxicated and not remember me.' That must be the reason why he did not give me even a little bit of riches." Thinking in this way, he came close to his own house.

'In every direction, it was surrounded by palaces that were like the sun, the fire and the moon. There were wonderful groves and gardens and many flocks of birds called out from them. There were bodies of water with blooming night lotuses, day lotuses, white lotuses and water lilies. It was surrounded by ornamented men and women whose eyes were like those of deer. "What is this place? Whom does this belong to? Where did all this come from?" While he was debating in this way, those men and women, who were as radiant as immortals, came forward to welcome the immensely fortunate one. They sang and played on many musical instruments. Hearing that her husband had come, his wife was excited and delighted. She quickly emerged from her house, in a form that was like that of Shri coming out of her residence. She was devoted to her husband. When she saw her husband, her eyes filled with tears of love and eagerness. She closed her eyes. In her heart, she embraced him with her mind. He glanced at his radiant wife, resembling a goddess in a vimana. She was resplendent in the midst of female servants wearing golden necklaces [792] and he was astounded. He was himself delighted and entered his own house with her. It was full of hundreds of bejewelled pillars, like the great Indra's residence. The beds were as white as the froth on milk. They were made out of ivory and were covered with golden spreads. There were couches with golden legs and fans and whisks. There were golden seats, with soft cushions on them. Nets of pearls hung from the dazzling canopies. The walls were made out of sparkling crystal and inlaid with extremely expensive emeralds. There were women ornamented with gems, holding dazzling lamps studded with jewels. The brahmana saw the opulence there, with every kind of prosperity. Without any agitation, he debated about the reason behind his prosperity. "I am certainly unfortunate. Since childhood, I have suffered from penury. The reason for my prosperity is nothing but the one who confers great opulence through

his glances. That is none other than the best among the Yadus. He is the one who enjoys all kinds of prosperity. Though I did not speak, he gave me plenty of what I wanted to ask for, like Parjanya showering down. My friend is a bull among the Dasharhas and he himself saw. He regards what he himself has given as a trifle. However, if a well-wisher does something that is insignificant, he regards it as a lot. I only took him handfuls of parched and flattened rice. However, filled with joy, the great-souled one accepted it. From one life to another life, may I possess goodwill, friendship, affection and servitude towards him. The great being is a reservoir of qualities. May I be attached to those who are devoted to that Purusha. For his devotees, the wonderful and illustrious one is himself a treasure. The one without birth is capable of bestowing kingdoms and prosperity. However, he is himself wise and can see that for those who lack foresight, wealth is the cause of intoxication and downfall." He was extremely devoted to Janardana and he used his intelligence to decide in this way. Though he wished to give up all these objects, with his wife, he enjoyed them. However, he did not lust after them excessively. The lord Hari is the god of the gods. He is the lord of sacrifices. Though he is powerful, he accepts brahmanas as divinities. He does not know of anything that is superior to them. The brahmana was the illustrious one's well-wisher. He saw that the unvanquished one is conquered by those who are his own servants. He meditated on him and the force of this loosened his own bonds. Within a short period of time, he obtained the abode that is the destination of the virtuous. He regards brahmanas as divinities. If a person hears about his devotion to brahmanas, his sentiments turn towards devotion towards the illustrious one and he is freed from all the bondage of karma.'

Chapter 10(82)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Once, while Rama and Krishna were residing in Dvaravati, there was a great eclipse of the sun, as if the end of the kalpa had arrived. O king! Having got to know about it in advance, people from all di-

rections went to the region known as Samantapanchaka, so as to ensure benefit for themselves. [793] Rama, [794] supreme among the wielders of weapons, made the earth empty of kshatriyas at that spot. The floods of blood from the kings created large lakes there. The illustrious Rama was untouched by this deed. However, so as to instruct people, the lord performed a sacrifice there, as if to dispel any sin he might have been tainted with. It was a great tirtha and all the subjects of Bharatavarsha went there on a pilgrimage. O descendant of the Bharata linage! The Vrishnis, Akrura, Vasudeva, [795] Ahuka and others, went there, wishing to cleanse themselves of their own sins. So did Gada, Pradyumna, Samba and others. Suchandra, Shuka, Sarana and Aniruddha, along with the leader, Kritavarma, stayed back, for protection. [796] Along the road, those greatly energetic ones, wearing golden necklaces, were resplendent. Their chariots were like the vehicles of the gods. The movement of the horses was as light as that of waves. The elephants trumpeted like clouds. The men were as dazzling as vidyadharas. Along with their wives, they were adorned in divine garlands and garments and were armoured. They seemed to be travelling through the sky. The immensely fortunate ones bathed there. They controlled themselves and bathed. They gave brahmanas cows, garments, garlands and golden necklaces. After this, [797] following the rites, the Vrishnis again bathed in Rama's lakes. They gave the best of food to the best of brahmanas and said, "May our devotion to Krishna remain." Having taken the permission of those who were divinities to Krishna, [798] as they chose, the Vrishnis seated themselves under the cool shade of trees and ate. [799]

'Wishing to see them, the kings who were their well-wishers and matrimonial allies arrived there—Matsyas, Ushinaras, Koushalya, Vidarbhas, Kurus, Srinjaya, Kambojas, Kekayas, Madras, Kuntis, Anartas and Keralas. O king! There were hundreds of others, from their own side, as well as adversaries. Their well-wishers, the gopas and the gopis, Nanda and the others, had been anxious for a long time. They were overwhelmed with joy at seeing each other. Their hearts and faces resembled radiant and newly bloomed lotuses. With tears flowing from their eyes, they embraced each other firmly. Their body hair stood up. Since they were overwhelmed with

joy, their voices choked. With a great deal of affection, the women glanced at each other. Casting smiling and sidelong glances, they embraced each other. The kunkuma from one person's breast smeared against that of another's. With tears of love in their eyes, they engulfed each other in their arms. They honoured the elders and were honoured by those who were younger. They welcomed each other and asked about each other's welfare. They then spoke to each other about Krishna's accounts.

'Pritha met her brothers, sisters and their sons, and her parents too. She met Mukunda and the wives of her brothers. While conversing with them, she forgot her sorrow. Kunti said, "O noble elder brother! [800] I think that there have been no benedictions for me. When I was afflicted because of the hardships, you excellent ones did not remember me. When destiny is unfavourable, a person's own relatives, well-wishers, kin, sons, brothers and even the parents, no longer remember the person." Vasudeva replied, "O mother! [801] Do not censure us. Men are puppets in the hands of destiny. Whether one does something, or is made to do something, people are under the lord's subjugation. Tormented by Kamsa, all of us fled in different directions. O sister! It is destiny that has again brought us back to our proper places." Vasudeva, Ugrasena and the other Yadus honoured the kings. On seeing Achyuta, they were filled with supreme bliss. Bhishma, Drona, Ambika's son, [802] Gandhari and her sons, the Pandavas and their wives, Kunti, Sanjaya, Vidura, Kripa, Kuntibhoja, Virata, Bhishmaka, the great Nagnajit, Purujit, Drupada, Shalya, Dhrishtaketu, Damaghosha, Vishalaksha, Maithila, Madra, Kekaya, Yudhamanyu, Susharma, Bahlika and others, along with their sons, were present. O Indra among kings! The kings who followed Yudhishthira were amazed to see Shouri's form, the residence of Shri, along with his wives. Rama and Krishna honoured those who had arrived in the proper way. Filled with joy, they praised the Vrishnis, who were Krishna's companions. "O lord of Bhoja! [803] Among men in this world, your birth has been successful. Yogis find it impossible to constantly see Krishna. But you have seen him in that way. The sacred texts speak about his glory, which purifies all contamination, as do the water that has washed his feet and the words he speaks through the sacred texts. The touch of his

lotus feet revived the powers of the earth, which had been ravaged by time, and she showers down all the objects of desire. The householder's path is one that leads to hell. However, Vishnu himself, the source of heaven, emancipation and cessation, [804] has resided there with you. You can see him. You can touch him. You can walk with him. You can converse with him. You can lie down with him. You can be seated with him. You can eat with him. You can have matrimonial alliances with him. You can have blood relationships with him." [805]

'Hearing that the Yadus, with Krishna at the forefront, had come there, Nanda arrived there, wishing to see them. He was surrounded by gopas, who had many objects on their carts. Seeing him, the Vrishnis were delighted, as if life had returned to their bodies. Not having seen him for a long time, they had suffered. They stood up and firmly embraced him. Delighted and overwhelmed with love, Vasudeva [806] embraced him. He remembered how he had suffered because of what Kamsa had done and how he had left his son in Gokula. Krishna and Rama embraced and honoured their parents. [807] O extender of the Kuru lineage! Their throats choked with love and they were unable to say anything. The immensely fortunate Yashoda embraced her two sons in her arms and placed them on her lap, forgetting her sorrow. Remembering the friendship that she had shown towards them, Rohini and Devaki embraced the queen of Vraja. [808] With tears choking their voices, they said, "O queen of Vraja! Who can forget the constant friendship the two of you have shown us? There is nothing in this world that is enough to pay you back, even if one possessed Indra's riches. When these two had not seen their parents, you were their parents. You tended to them, reared them, nourished them and protected them. They resided with you and you protected them, just as the eyelids protect the eyes. There was no fear from any quarter. The virtuous do not distinguish between someone who is theirs and someone who is someone else's." The gopis had obtained their desired Krishna after a long time. Glancing at him with their eyes, they cursed the creator of eyelids. [809] Using their eyes, all of them completely embraced him in their hearts. This state of immersion is one that is impossible to achieve, even for those who are constantly engaged. [810]

'When they were in such a state, the illustrious one met them in a secluded place. He embraced each of them and asked about their welfare. He smiled and spoke to them. "O friends! Do you remember me? It was to accomplish the objective of my relatives that I have been away for such a long time. My mind was engaged in destroying the side of the adversary. Do you reprimand me? Do you suspect me of being ungrateful? Indeed, it is the illustrious one who brings creatures together and separates them. The wind brings together and separates masses of clouds, grass, cotton and dust. This is exactly what the creator of beings does with beings. Devotion towards me certainly leads to immortality. It is good fortune that you possess this kind of affection towards me. That leads to obtaining me. I am the beginning and the end of all beings. O beautiful ladies! I am inside and outside, just like the elements—space, water, earth, wind and fire. It is these that exist in beings. The atman is in beings. [811] Both of these are manifest in me. But behold the supreme and the imperishable, manifest in me." The gopis were thus instructed by Krishna about the knowledge of *adhyatma*. [812] Through constantly remembering him, they destroyed their living sheaths and were immersed in him. They said, "O one with the lotus in the navel! Lords of yoga, those who are unfathomable in their understanding, think about your lotus feet in their hearts. They are the support for deliverance from the well of samsara into which, those who are engaged in household pursuits have fallen. May our minds be always enlightened."'

Chapter 10(83)

Shri-Shuka said, 'The illustrious one, who was the preceptor as well as the destination, favoured the gopis in this way. He next asked Yudhishthira and all the other well-wishers about their welfare. They were asked by the protector of the world and honoured extremely well. Delighted, they replied. On seeing his feet, all their sins were destroyed. "O lord! How can there be anything inauspicious for those who have drunk the nectar from your lotus feet? Sometimes, those great minds articulate this through their mouths and

using the ears as cups, it can be drunk. Those with bodies suffer from amnesia about who created the bodies and this destroys that loss of memory. The radiance of your atman destroys the three kinds of states created in ourselves. [813] You are a deluge of bliss. Your knowledge is absolute and without limits. Time has ravaged the sacred texts and using your yoga maya, you have assumed a form so as to save them. You are the destination of *paramahamsa*s. [814] We bow down before you." The people spoke in this way about Uttamashloka, who is like a jewel on the crest, and praised him. The Andhaka and Kourava women met and spoke to each other about Govinda's account, which is sung about in the three worlds. Listen. I will describe it to you.

'Droupadi said, "O princess of Vidarbha, [815] who is never separated from him! O Bhadra! [816] O Jambavati! O Koushala! O Satyabhama! O Kalindi! O Shaibya! O Rohini! [817] O Lakshmana! O wives of Krishna! The illustrious one uses his maya to follow the conduct of ordinary people. Tell us. How did he himself marry you?"

'Rukmini replied, "When I was to be bestowed on Chedi, all the invincible kings and their soldiers raised their bows. However, he placed the dust of his feet on their heads. Like a lord of deer, he took his share away from a herd of sheep. His feet are Shri's abode. May they always be mine to worship."

'Satyabhama replied, "My father's heart was tormented because of his brother's [818] death. He defeated the king of bears to remove the stain on his reputation. He took away the jewel. [819] Because of his powers, my father was terrified and bestowed me on him, though I had been promised to another." [820]

'Jambavati replied, "My father [821] did not know that his own protector and divinity, Sita's consort, had assumed a body. He fought against him for twenty-seven days. When he had tested him and got to know, he respectfully offered me as a gift, along with the jewel, clasping his feet. I am his female servant."

'Kalindi replied, "He knew that I was performing austerities with the hope of touching his feet. He sent his friend [822] and accepted my hand. I am

the one who sweeps his house."

'Mitravinda replied, "He came to my svayamvara and defeated all the kings and my brothers, who insulted him. He took me away, like a lion taking away its share from a pack of dogs. The abode of Shri brought me to his own city. In one life after another, may I have the fortune of washing his feet."

'Satya replied, "My father arranged for seven bulls that were extremely strong. They were energetic and possessed extremely sharp horns. He wished to test the bravery of the kings. They destroyed the pride of those brave ones. However, he swiftly subdued them. Toying with them, he bound them up, the way a child does with a kid goat. In this way, he won me and my female servants as viryashulka. With four kinds of forces, [823] kings tried to obstruct his path. But he defeated them and brought me away. May I be able to serve him."

'Bhadra replied, "O Krishna! [824] My heart was devoted to Krishna, my maternal cousin. My father himself invited him and bestowed me on him, along with my female friends and one akshouhini. From one life to another life, as I am whirled around in my bonds of karma, may I be able to touch his feet. That will be best for me."

'Lakshmana replied, "O queen! I repeatedly heard Narada chant about Achyuta's birth and deeds. My mind was fixed on Mukunda. Indeed, the one with the lotus in her hand [825] thought about it carefully and chose him, rejecting the guardians of the worlds. O virtuous lady! My father is known as Brihatsena and he is devoted to his daughter. Ascertaining my intentions, he devised a means of bringing this about. O queen! In your svayamvara, a fish was devised for Partha's [826] sake. It was the same with mine, except that the fish was covered from all sides and could not be seen. There was only a reflection in the water. Hearing about this, all the kings arrived in my father's city. They knew the truth about all astras and shastras and were accompanied by thousands of instructors. According to valour and according to age, my father honoured all of them. With their minds on me, they took up the bow and arrow kept in the assembly and tried to pierce it. Some picked up the bow, but unable to string it, put it aside. Some lords were only

able to string it up to the elbow. [827] They were hurled back and fell down. There were other brave ones, Magadha, [828] Ambashta, Chedi, Bhima, Duryodhana and Karna, who could string it. But they could not determine the location. [829] Partha looked at the reflection of the fish in the water and could determine its location. However, when he released the arrow, it only touched the target from the side and did not pierce it. The kings withdrew, their pride shattered. As if toying, the illustrious one picked up the bow and strung it. He fixed the arrow and looked at the fish's reflection only once. He pierced it with the arrow and it fell down. At that time, the sun was in Abhijit nakshatra. [830] Drums were sounded in heaven and shouts of 'victory' were raised on earth. The gods were filled with joy and repeatedly showered down flowers. At this, I entered the arena on my feet, anklets tinkling. I held a brilliant garland that was made out of gold and jewels. I was wearing new lower and upper garments made out of silk. A wreath of flowers was braided into my hair. I smiled bashfully. I raised my face, with its thick locks of hair. The shine of the earrings illuminated my cheeks. With a gentle smile, I cast a sidelong glance at the kings who were all around. With my heart devoted to Murari, I slowly placed the garland around his neck. There were the sounds of drums, tabors, conch shells, larger drums, kettledrums and other instruments. Male and female dancers started to dance. The singers started to sing. O Yajnaseni! [831] In this way, I chose the lord. However, the leaders among the kings could not tolerate my choosing the illustrious one. With their hearts full of desire for me, they challenged him. He placed me on the chariot, yoked to four jewels among horses. He raised the Sharnga bow and armoured himself. The four-armed one stood there, ready to fight. O queen! Daruka drove the chariot that was plated with gold. The kings looked on, just as deer looked at a king of deer. Trying to restrain him, for some distance, the kings followed him from the rear. Some were ready and raised their bows. But they were like village dogs after a lion. Torrents of arrows were released from Sharnga and some fell down on the field of battle, with their arms, thighs and necks severed. The others gave up and fled. The lord of Yadu entered his decorated city of Kushasthali, which is praised in heaven and on earth. There were colourful flags, pennants and

arches that blocked out even the sun. He entered, as if the sun was entering its own abode. My father honoured his well-wishers, matrimonial allies and relatives with extremely expensive garments, ornaments, couches, seats and other furnishings. Though he [832] is complete, he gave him female servants, all kinds of riches, soldiers, elephant riders, chariots, horse riders and extremely expensive weapons. He finds bliss in his own self and there are maids in his home. Abandoning all attachment, we must have undertaken austerities." [833]

'The queens [834] replied, "He killed Bhouma [835] and his companions in the battle and found us imprisoned there. He got to know that we were the daughters of kings whom he had defeated in the course of his conquest. He freed us. However, in a desire to be free of samsara, we had been remembering his lotus feet. Therefore, though he has already achieved all his desires, he married us. O virtuous lady! We do not desire a kingdom on earth, a kingdom in heaven, unlimited objects of pleasure, supernatural powers, the status of Parameshthi, [836] anything infinite, or Hari as a destination. We desire only this much, that we should bear the dust of his handsome feet on our heads. He is the wielder of the mace and the dust has been enriched by the fragrance of the kunkuma from Shri's breasts. We desire what the women of Vraja, the gopas who herd the cows and the plants and grass along the banks desire—the touch of the great-souled one's feet.'

Chapter 10(84)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Pritha, Subala's daughter, [837] Yajnaseni, Madhavi, [838] the wives of the kings and his own gopis were bound to Hari in bonds of love. Krishna is in the atmans of everything. Hearing all this, all of them were extremely amazed and their eyes filled with tears. In this way, the conversation occurred, men with men and women with women. At that time, wishing to see Krishna and Rama, the sages arrived there—Dvaipayana, Narada, Chyavana, Devala, Asita, Vishvamitra, Shatananda, Bharadvaja, Goutama, Rama [839] and his disciples, the illustrious Vasishtha, Galava, Bhrigu, Pu-

lastya, Kashyapa, Atri, Markandeya, Brihaspati, Dvita, Trita, Ekata, Brahma's sons, [840] Angiras, Agastya, Yajnavalkya, Vamadeva and others. The kings, the Pandavas, Krishna and Rama, and the others had been seated earlier. They quickly arose and bowed down to the ones who are respected throughout the universe. All of them, along with Rama and Achyuta, honoured them and gave them many kinds of offerings—words of welcome, seats, water to wash the feet, arghya, garlands, incense and pastes.

'When they were happily seated, the illustrious one, whose body protects dharma, addressed them in these words. In the midst of that great assembly, they heard. The illustrious one said, "Wonderful! We have now obtained all the fruits of being born. We have seen the lords of yoga, whom even the gods find it extremely difficult to behold. How can men who are limited in austerities and whose perception of god is limited to those who are worshipped, [841] get an opportunity of seeing you, touching you, questioning you, bowing down to you and worshipping your feet? Water does not constitute tirthas. Gods are not made out of clay and stone. These purify after a long period of time, but the sight of virtuous ones purifies instantly. Agni, Surya, Chandra, the stars, earth, water, space, breath, speech and mind may be worshipped. But these are created by a sense of duality and do not take away sin. However, the service of the learned destroys it instantly. This body is like a corpse, consisting of the three elements. [842] A person whose intelligence is such that he takes this body to be his self, wife and others to be his own, if his intelligence is such that he takes objects made of earth as objects of worship, and if his intelligence is such that he takes water to be a tirtha, then people who know never regard him as wise. He is like a cow or a donkey." They heard the words of the illustrious Krishna, whose intelligence was unlimited. They were extremely difficult to comprehend. The brahmanas remained seated and silent. Their minds were in a whirl. The sages thought for a long time and decided that since he was the lord who controlled everything, he must have said this for the sake of instructing people. They smiled and spoke to the preceptor of the universe. "We are the best among those who know the truth and we are the foremost among those who have created the universe. However, we are confounded by your maya.

The lord's conduct is hidden in what he does in this world. How wonderful is the illustrious one's conduct. How wonderful is the lord's imitated conduct. [843] He makes no efforts, but appears in many kinds of forms. He creates, preserves and destroys, but is not bound down by that. He is like the earth, since the transformations of the earth appear in many names and forms. From time to time, to protect those who are your devotees and to chastise the wicked, you assume the form of sattva. [844] In your own pastimes, you are the eternal path of the Vedas and the atman of varnas and ashramas. You are the supreme Purusha. The brahman is your pure heart. Through austerities, studying and self-control, one can perceive the truth that is beyond the manifest and the unmanifest. O brahman! Those who are born in the lineages of brahmanas use the sacred texts to realize your atman. You are the true abode. You are foremost among those who are devoted to brahmanas and you worship them. Today, our birth, learning, austerities and vision has been rendered successful. You are the destination of the virtuous and the supreme and ultimate benefit and we have met you. O illustrious Krishna! O one who is unlimited in intelligence! We bow down to you. You are the paramatman, but you have shrouded your glory through your own yoga maya. The kings and the Vrishnis find pleasure with you, but they do not know you. You are the lord. You are time. Their atmans are covered in the curtain of maya. A sleeping person's perception of the reality about his self is coloured by the attributes of the names and forms he sees. He does not know what is distinct from this. [845] In that way, the senses of someone who is confounded by maya takes the names and forms of material objects to be real. His memory is confused. Today, we have seen your feet. They are the source of the tirtha that washes away floods of sins. [846] Extremely perfected yogis hold them in their hearts. However, only those who possess extreme devotion towards you can destroy the sheath of the living body and attain you as a destination. Therefore, show compassion towards your devotees." O royal sage! Having said this, the sages made up their minds to leave for their own hermitages and sought the permission of Dasharha, Dhritarashtra and Yudhishthira.

‘Seeing that they were about to leave, the immensely illustrious Vasudeva [847] bowed down and clasped their feet. He controlled himself and spoke to them. Vasudeva said, “I bow down to the rishis. All the gods are in them. You should listen to what I have to say. You should explain what karma one should undertake, so that one can counter the effects of karma.” Narada replied, “O brahmanas! It is not surprising that Vasudeva should desire to know this. Thinking Krishna to be his child, he has asked us about what is good for his own atman. [848] In the mortal world, familiarity is the root cause of disregard. Those who live on the banks of the Ganga ignore it and go elsewhere to be purified. His [849] wisdom is not affected by time, creation, destruction and other things. His attributes are his own and there is nothing else that can disrupt them. He is not affected by material hardships, the consequences of karma and the gunas. The lord’s consciousness is not affected. He is absolute, without a second. However, his own powers are enveloped in prana and other things and others take him to be ordinary, just like the sun, when it is shrouded in clouds, mist and eclipses.” O king! After this, while all the kings and Achyuta and Rama heard, the sages addressed Anakadundubhi. “The virtuous have determined the karma that must be undertaken to counter the effect of karmas. One must faithfully perform a sacrifice to Vishnu, the lord of all sacrifices. Wise ones, who possess the insight of the sacred texts, have said that this leads to tranquility of mind. This has been shown to be an easy path of yoga and a pursuit of dharma that delights the mind. For a dvija who is in the householder stage, this is the route to obtain benedictions. With wealth one has oneself earned, one must perform devoted and pure worship to Purusha. The desire for riches is curbed by giving donations at sacrifices. The desire for homes, wives and sons is curbed. O supreme one! In this way, a learned person casts aside all the hardships that are caused to him by the ravages of time. That is the reason patient people have given up the desire for household life and have left for hermitages. O lord! Dvijas have three kinds of debts, to gods, rishis and ancestors. If he gives up his body without first repaying these through sacrifices, studying and sons, [850] his downfall is certain. O immensely intelligent one! You have already been freed from two of those, to rishis and ancestors.

Perform a sacrifice to free yourself of the debt to the gods. Having repaid that, you can be without a shelter. [851] O Vasudeva! You must certainly have worshipped Hari, the lord of the universe, with supreme and great devotion. That is the reason he has become your son." Hearing their words, the great-minded Vasudeva bowed his head down and gratified them.

'He asked those rishis to be the officiating priests. O king! He was devoted to dharma and the rishis were requested according to the principles of dharma. In that place, [852] they prepared for a supreme sacrifice. O king! When he was about to be consecrated, the Vrishnis and the kings bathed and attired themselves in excellent garments. They wore garlands of lotuses and decorated themselves with excellent ornaments. The delighted queens wore necklaces made out of gold [853] and wore excellent garments. They smeared themselves with pastes and with objects in their hands, approached the arena marked for the consecration. Drums, tabors, conch shells, larger drums and kettledrums were sounded. Male and female dancers danced. The sutas and magadhas sang words of praise. Along with their husbands, gandharva ladies sang in extremely melodious voices. Following the prescribed ordinances, the officiating priests sprinkled and consecrated him. Surrounded by his eighteen wives, he looked like King Soma, surrounded by the stars. They wore girdles, bangles, necklaces, anklets and earrings. Ornamented and clad in deerskin, he was radiant. O great king! The officiating priests wore silk garments and jewels. The assistant priests were radiant, like at the sacrifice of Vritra's slayer. [854] Along with their own relatives, sons and wives, Rama and Krishna, the two lords of all living creatures, dazzled because of their own powers. Each part of the sacrifice was performed according to the ordinances. *Agnihotra* and other aspects were observed. The lord was worshipped through *prakrita, vaikrita, dravya* and jnana rituals. [855] At the appropriate time, as has been recommended, he gave dakshina to the officiating priests. Though they were ornamented, he gave them ornaments, cows, maidens and extremely expensive gifts. The *maharshi*s made him execute the patni-samjaya and avabhritha parts. With the performer of the sacrifice [856] at the forefront, the brahmanas bathed in Rama's [857]lake. After having bathed, along with his wives, he gave orna-

ments and garments to the bandis. Wearing ornaments, he worshipped all the varnas and dogs with food. With a lot of gifts, he honoured his relatives, along with their wives and sons, Vidarbha, Kosala, Kuru, Kashi, Kekaya, Srinjaya, the officiating priests, the assistant priests, the large number of gods, men, bhutas, ancestors and charanas. All of them praised the sacrifice and taking the leave of the one who was Shri's abode, departed.

'The hearts of Dhritarashtra, his younger brother, [858] the Parthas, Bhishma, Drona, Pritha, the twins, Narada, the illustrious Vyasa, the well-wishers, the matrimonial allies and the relatives were filled with affection and they embraced their relatives, the Yadus. Suffering because of the separation, together with the other people, they left for their own countries. Nanda and the cowherds were worshipped with a great deal of gifts, given by Krishna, Rama, Ugrasena and the others. Devoted to their relatives, they resided for some more time. Thus, Vasudeva easily crossed the great ocean, represented by his wishes. Surrounded by his well-wishers and delighted in his mind, he held Nanda by the hand and spoke to him. Vasudeva said, "O brother! This bond, known as affection among men, has been created by the lord. I think that it is extremely difficult to sever, even for brave ones and yogis. Hence, despite us being ungrateful and undeserving, you supreme ones have shown us this friendship. It has not been reciprocated and can never be repaid. O brother! Earlier, we were incapable of doing anything good towards you. Now, we are blinded by the intoxication of prosperity and do not see that you are right in front of us. O one who deserves to be honoured! The prosperity of a kingdom is not meant for a person who desires benefit for himself. His vision becomes like that of a blind man and he does not see his own relatives and friends." Thus, Anakadundubhi's heart was softened by love. He wept. As he remembered the act of friendship that had been done towards him, his eyes filled with tears. Nanda desired to do what would bring pleasure to his friend. He also loved Govinda and Rama. Therefore, he said, "I will leave today" or "I will leave tomorrow". However, honoured by the Yadus, he resided with them for three months. Along with the residents of Vraja and along with his relatives, all his desires were satisfied. He was given extremely expensive ornaments, silken garments,

priceless gifts and furnishings. Thereafter, with the gifts given by Vasudeva, Ugrasena, Krishna, Uddhava, Bala and the others, he left, along with the Yadus. [859] The minds of Nanda, the gopas and the gopis were fixed on the lord Govinda's lotus feet and they were incapable of withdrawing. They left for Mathura. Krishna was like a divinity to the Vrishnis. When the relatives had departed, on seeing that the monsoon was about to set in, they again returned to Dvaravati. They told the people about the great festivities performed by the lord of the Yadus, [860] about how they had met their well-wishers and about everything else that occurred in the course of their visit to the tirthas.'

Chapter 10(87)

Parikshit asked, 'O brahmana! The brahman cannot be described and is without gunas. It is supreme and is beyond manifestations and their causes. How can the shruti texts, which are about the conduct of the gunas, be used to directly describe it?' [861]

Shri-Shuka replied, 'For living beings, the lord created intelligence, senses, mind and prana for material gratification, and samsara so that the atman can be realized. This is what the Upanishads say about the brahman, and the ancestors of our ancestors meditated on this. If a person meditates on this, he is freed from material association and attains success. In this connection, I will describe to you an account connected with Narayana. This is about a conversation between Narada and the rishi Narayana. Once, Narada, loved by the illustrious one, was roaming around the worlds. To meet the ancient rishi, he went to Narayana's hermitage. From the beginning of the kalpa, he has been there, in this Bharatavarsha, performing austerities with dharma, jnana, self-control and tranquility. He has done this for the welfare of men in this world and in the next one. He was seated there, surrounded by rishis and residents of the village of Kalapa. O extender of the Kuru lineage! He bowed down and asked him exactly this. While the rishis heard, the illustri-

ous one [862] told him about an ancient conversation that had taken place among the residents of Janaloka about the nature of the brahman.

'The illustrious one [863] said, "O one born from Svayambhu! In ancient times, in Janaloka, there was a sacrifice. There were sages born through mental powers there, those who held up their seed, and they spoke about the brahman. At that time, you had gone to Shvetadvipa to see the lord, who was lying down. [864] There was an extremely well-conducted discussion about the brahman and the shruti texts. What you asked me is exactly the question that was raised there. They were all equal in learning, austerities and good conduct, and they were all impartial in their treatment of their own enemies and neutral parties. Nevertheless, they chose one to speak and the others listened."

'Sanandana said, "After swallowing up his own creation, [865] the supreme one lay down, along with his potencies. The shrutis awoke him, describing his signs. [866] This was like a sleeping king being woken at dawn by bandis, his servants, who approach him and use excellent shlokas to praise his valour."

'The shrutis said, "Victory to you. O unvanquished one! Victory to you. You are the one who is complete in his atman, with all your potencies. You are the one who awakens the energies of everything, mobile and immobile. Destroy the taints of those who have accepted the gunas. As you engage, the sacred texts can sometimes appreciate your unvanquished atman. The supreme is the foundation of creation and destruction and is pervasive. Like clay, it generates transformations, but is not subject to transformations itself. [867] Therefore, the perceived world is identified with the supreme. The minds, words and conduct of the rishis were immersed in you. [868] The feet of men are placed on earth. How can they ignore the earth on which they dwell? [869] O lord of the three! [870] The wise submerge themselves in the ocean of amrita that your accounts are, and cast aside their torments. These destroy all impurities from the worlds. What need be said about those who have used their own powers to cleanse their minds of gunas and the effects of time? O supreme one! They worship your true nature and experience infinite and uninterrupted bliss. Only those who follow you truly breathe, the

others are like bellows. It is through your favours that Mahat, ahamkara and the others were created from the cosmic egg. You are the ultimate Purusha who enters and animates the forms, *annamaya* and the others. [871] You are supreme and distinct from the gross and the subtle. You are the underlying reality. Among those who follow the paths of the rishis, those with gross vision worship you in the stomach. [872] The followers of Aruni are more subtle and worship you in the cavity of the heart. [873] O infinite one! Their consciousness rises up to your supreme abode in the crown of the head. [874] A person who reaches that spot no longer falls down into this world, into the mouth of death. You enter the many wonderful species you have yourself created, as if you are their cause. Like the fire, you imitate the forms, superior and inferior, that you yourself have created. [875] Those who are spotless in their intelligence and do not desire anything material comprehend your undifferentiated, unchanging and true manifestation among all these unreal forms. The individual entity resides in these forms because of his own karma, but is covered by the gross and the subtle. You are spoken of [876] as the Purusha who possesses all the powers and these manifestations are your own portions. Thus, wise men have ascertained in the sacred texts that the human state is the field into which the seed is sown. They therefore worship your feet on earth. [877] Faith in you is the means of escaping from samsara. O lord! The truth about the atman is extremely difficult to comprehend. You assume forms to elucidate this. There are those who destroy their exhaustion by submerging themselves into the ocean of amrita represented by your great deeds. Some such people do not desire anything, not even emancipation. They renounce their homes and associate with your devotees, who gather at your lotus feet like swans. When the nest [878] follows the path that leads to you, it behaves like a beloved friend to the atman. You are always eager to help and friendly towards those who seek to ensure for themselves. But alas! There are those who do not find pleasure in you. They worship the unreal and this is like killing their own selves. Because of their desires, they wander around in this fearful existence, in evil physical bodies. There are sages who controlled their breath, mind and senses, firm in their practice of yoga. Thereby, they worshipped you and obtained your state. However, that

state was also obtained by your enemies, who constantly remembered you. So did the women, whose minds were attached to your sturdy arms, which were like the coils of the Indra among serpents. You look upon us in the same way. We see you in everything and we will also obtain the nectar of your lotus feet. Indeed, how can anyone who has been born or died after the universal destruction know about someone who existed before all this? The rishi [879] and the large number of gods of both categories [880] who followed him came after that. At that time, the gross and the subtle, the composition of the two, [881] the flow of time and the sacred texts did not exist, since you were lying down and had withdrawn everything. Those who teach that creation results from the unreal, or those who say that the permanent atman dies, or those who posit duality, or those who declare that the material is permanent, base themselves on illusions. Those who believe that Purusha results from the three gunas, or from modifications, [882] say this because of ignorance. This has no basis in you. You are pure knowledge and absolute consciousness. That the real is based on the three modes [883] is a projection of the mind on you. To human beings, the unreal appears in this way. Those who realize the atman consider this universe as real only because it is a projection of the atman. Transformations of gold need not be rejected, because their essence consists of gold. In that way, what you have created and entered can be ascertained to be no different from your atman. Those who worship you as the entity that exists within all beings disregard death and place their feet on its head. However, those who turn away from you are bound down by your words, [884] like animals. Indeed, only those who are devoted to you are purified. Though you possess no material senses, you are self-luminous and the one who wields power over all the senses. Material nature and the gods [885] accept offerings offered to them and worship you. This is like lords of territories offering tribute to the lord of the entire earth. The creators of the universe faithfully execute the tasks that have been assigned to them by you. O liberated one! You are supreme and in your pastimes, when you cast your glances, the energy and motivation of the species know as mobile and immobile objects is awakened. There is nothing that is alien to you. Nor is there anything that is your own. You are like the sky,

which has no attributes but resembles the void that it fills. O one who is permanent! If the numerous embodied entities were permanent and could go everywhere, there would be no one to control and rule them. [886] Therefore, it must be otherwise. That which is created is controlled by the creator, since the created is never distinct from its cause. [887] Though you are equally present in all your manifestations, those who profess to know you do not know. You are beyond knowledge and that view is itself defective. Creation does not result from Prakriti, Purusha, or their combination. [888] Like bubbles come into existence through the combination of water and air, living entities are only apparently generated from that combination. All these, with different names and attributes, merge back into you, the supreme. This is like rivers merging into the ocean, or juices [889] merging into honey. Among men who are whirled around in your maya, there are some who are wise and greatly devoted to you and render service to you, the potent one who delivers from samsara. How can those who follow you suffer from fear of samsara? The three rims [890] are caused by the furrowing of your eyebrows and lead to fear among those who do not seek shelter with you. Even those who conquer their senses and their breath of life cannot control the mind, which is like an unrestrained horse. O one without birth! In this world, they attempt to regulate it through unsteady means that only lead to hardships. They abandon the preceptor's feet and are beset by hundreds of difficulties. They are like merchants, who have not engaged a helmsman, on the ocean. For those men who seek refuge with you, you are the atman, the embodiment of all pleasures. What use do they have for own relatives, sons, bodies, wives, wealth, homes, immobile property, chariots and even life itself? Those who do not know this truth are engaged in the pursuit of sexual pleasure. What happiness can this world give? Its nature is such that it is destroyed. It has no more than transient substance. There are rishis who are devoid of pride. They bear your lotus feet and the water that washed your feet in their hearts. They visit sacred places and tirthas on earth. They find eternal bliss in the atman. If a man turns his mind towards you, he no longer serves anything connected with the home, since those only rob him of his qualities. Since this universe arose from the real, it must be real. This logic

is subject to refutation. In some ordinary cases, this is not true. [891] In other cases, perceptions about both can be illusory. [892]A traditional succession of blind people desire to establish the imaginary as permanent reality. They are bewildered by numerous words and are dulled by repeated mentions of rituals. This universe did not exist before its creation. Nor will it exist after its destruction. Hence, it is false. But it can be deduced that in the interim, it appears within the absolute you as your manifestation. Therefore, it can be compared to the various kinds of transformations that material objects undergo. It is a figment of the mind and is not real. Those who take it to be real are ignorant. Under the influence of material energy, the jivatman lies down next to maya and embraces her qualities. It serves those assumed forms and, deprived of its prosperity, follows the cycle of birth and death. But just as a snake casts aside its skin, you cast aside material energy. You are immeasurable in your greatness and glory. You possess the eight potencies [893] and opulence. If those who have renounced do not exterminate the roots of desire from their hearts, though you exist in their hearts, they find it impossible to obtain you. You remain like a jewel around the throat, forgotten by the wearer. O illustrious one! Those yogis who gratify their senses find miseries both in this world and in the next. Death does not let them go and they do not obtain you. Because of you, a person who obtains you does not know the auspicious or the inauspicious, the consequences of good deeds or wicked ones. O one with the qualities! Nor is such an embodied entity aware of the words recommended every day, for every yuga. [894] He hears about you, chanted from one generation to another generation. Through this, men obtain the goal of emancipation. Since you are infinite, the lords of heaven have not been able to reach you. Since you are infinite, nor have you yourself done that. You are indeed inside innumerable cosmic eggs, along with their sheaths. The wheel of time whirls them around inside you, like particles of dust in the sky. The shrutis find their ultimate fruit in you. But their conclusion is indirect, negating every assertion about you."

'The illustrious one [895] said, "Brahma's sons heard this instruction about the atman. Having been successful and having known the destination of the atman, they worshipped Sanandana. In this way, great-souled ones who

were born earlier and travelled through the sky [896] distilled out all the essence of the Vedas, the Puranas and the Upanishads. O Brahma's son! [897] Faithfully uphold in your heart this instruction about the atman, capable of burning up the desires of men. As you will, travel anywhere on earth."

Shri-Shuka continued, 'O king! When he was commanded by the rishi in this way, the sage, who knew about the atman, faithfully accepted it. His vow was like that of a valiant one. He could remember everything, after hearing it only once. Having entirely accomplished his purpose, he spoke. Narada said, "I bow down to the illustrious Krishna. His deeds are spotless. So that all living creatures do not have to go through samsara, he uses his portions to manifest himself in charming forms." Having said this, he bowed down before the original rishi and his great-souled disciples. He then directly went to the hermitage of my father, Dvaipayana. O king! I have thus described to you the answer to the question you posed before me, about how the mind can reach the nirguna and undefinable brahman. [898] He is the one who watches over the beginning, the middle and the destruction of the universe. The lord of jivatmans is not manifest. He creates the universe and enters it, along with the jivatmans, controlling them. Just as a sleeping person loses all sense of his body, by resorting to the one who is without origin, one abandons maya. If a person desires kaivalya and desires to avoid the fear of birth, he should constantly meditate on Hari.'

Chapter 10(88)

The king said, 'Gods, asuras and humans who worship the auspicious Shiva generally obtain wealth and enjoy objects of pleasure, but not those who worship Hari, Lakshmi's consort. We have a great doubt about this and want to know. The two lords have contrary kinds of conduct and the states obtained by those who worship them are also contrary.'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'Shiva is always with Shakti and is united with the three signs of the gunas. He is the divinity for the three kinds of ahamkara —*vaikarika, taijasa* and *tamasa*. The sixteen transformations resulted from

these. [899] When a person worships one of these potencies, he enjoys all the resultant states. Hari is nirguna. He is the supreme Purusha, beyond Prakriti. He is omniscient and is witness to everything. A person who worships him becomes devoid of gunas. When the horse sacrifice was over, your grandfather, King Yudhishthira, heard about dharma from the illustrious one and asked Achyuta this question. The illustrious lord was pleased with the one who desired to hear. For bestowing benefit on the lineage of men, he had descended in the lineage of the Yadus. He spoke to him. The illustrious one said, "When I show favours on a person, I slowly rob him of his wealth. When he is without riches, his own relatives desert him and he moves from one misery to another misery. All his attempts to get wealth become futile and he is frustrated. He then contracts friendship with those who are devoted to me and I bestow my favours on him. He realizes the supreme and subtle brahman, the pure consciousness that is the infinite reality. Realizing the nature of the atman, the person is freed from samsara. Therefore, I am extremely difficult to worship. People ignore me and worship others who are easy to satisfy. [900] Having obtained kingdoms and prosperity, they become insolent, maddened and distracted. They are so rash as to slight the ones who conferred boons on them." Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva and other lords can confer boons and also curse. O dear one! Shiva and Brahma curse and bestow favours instantly, but not Achyuta. There is an ancient account about this, about how Girisha bestowed a boon on Vrikasura and brought about a calamity.

'There was an asura named Vrika and he was Shakuni's son. He met Narada on the road. On seeing him, the evil-minded one asked him which of the three gods was quickly satisfied. He said, "If you worship the god Girisha, you will obtain success swiftly. He is easily satisfied with the smallest qualities and is easily enraged with the slightest bit of wickedness. Like bandis, when they praised him, he was satisfied with the ten-headed one [901] and with Bana. He granted them a great deal of prosperity, but in each case, this resulted in a grave danger." Thus instructed, the asura started to worship Hara in Kedara. [902] He sliced off bits of flesh from his own body and offered these as oblations into the mouth of the fire. He was frustrated

at being unable to see the god. On the seventh day, he bathed his head in the waters of the tirtha and was about to slice off his head with an extremely sharp weapon. At this, the greatly compassionate Dhurjati [903] arose from the fire, like Agni. Just as we would do, he seized his arms with his own arms and restrained him. Through that touch, his wounds were healed and he regained his original form. He said, "O dear one! Enough of this. Ask for a boon from me. I will give you the boon that you desire. I am pleased if men worship me with some water and you have unnecessarily made your body suffer excessively." The wicked one asked the god for a boon that would bring fear to all creatures. "If I touch anyone on the head with my hand, let him die." O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Hearing this, the illustrious Rudra was disturbed in his mind. He said, "*Oum*" [904] and smiled. Like giving amrita to a serpent, he granted it to him. To test the efficacy of the boon, the asura tried to place his own hand on Shambhu's head. Shiva was terrified at what he had himself brought about. Scared and trembling at the prospect of being touched, he fled from that northern direction and was pursued. He fled everywhere on earth and heaven and to the ends of the directions. The lords of the gods were silent, not knowing how to counter this. He then went to radiant Vaikuntha, which is beyond darkness. Narayana was himself there, the supreme destination for those who have renounced everything, those who are serene and have cast aside their staffs. [905] If one goes there, one never returns. [906]

'The illustrious one, the destroyer of afflictions, had perceived the hardship. Using his yoga maya, he assumed the form of a small boy. [907] He wore a girdle [908] and deerskin and held a staff and *aksha* beads. He blazed like the fire. He held kusha grass in his hand. He approached from a distance and greeted him, as if in humility. The illustrious one said, "O Shakuni's son! It is evident that you are exhausted. Why have you travelled such a long distance? Please rest for a while. It is a person's body that yields all the objects of desire. O lord! If it is appropriate for us to hear, please tell us what you intend to do. Usually, a person accomplishes his purpose with the help of others." The illustrious one asked him in words that seemed to be a shower of amrita. All his exhaustion was gone and he [909] told him everything that

he had already done. The illustrious one said, “If that is the case, we do not believe in his words. He became a pishacha because of Daksha’s curse and is the king of pretas and pishachas. O Indra among the danavas! If you trust him as a preceptor of the universe, you can quickly test his words by placing your hand on your own head. O bull among the danavas! If Shambhu has not spoken the truth in any way, you can then kill the liar, so that he doesn’t utter a falsehood ever again.” The wonderful and well-articulated words spoken by the illustrious one confounded the evil-minded one. Without realizing what he was doing, he placed his own hand on his head. He instantly fell down, his head shattered, as if he had been struck by the vajra. Words of “victory”, “salutations” and “excellent” were heard in heaven. When the wicked Vrikasura was slain, Shiva was saved from the calamity and gods, rishis, ancestors and gandharvas showered down flowers. The illustrious Purushottama spoke to Girisha, who had been saved. “O god! O Mahadeva! This wicked one has been killed because of his own sins. O Isha! After causing offence to great beings and creatures, who can obtain peace, not to speak of a person who causes offence to the lord of the universe and the preceptor of the universe?” Hari is the paramatman himself. He is supreme. He is an inconceivable ocean of powers. If a person hears or recites the account of Girisha’s liberation, he is freed from enemies and from samsara.’

Chapter 10(89)

Shri-Shuka said, ‘O king! The rishis performed a sacrifice on the banks of the Sarasvati. A debate started among them about who among the three lords [910] was the greatest. O king! Wishing to know and find out, they sent Bhrigu, Brahma’s son, to Brahma’s assembly. Desiring to test his sattva, he did not bow down to him, or chant any hymns in his praise. Enraged at this, the illustrious one blazed in his own energy. Though rage was surging within himself, since it was his son, the lord used his intelligence to pacify it, just as fire is extinguished with water, which is created from it. [911] After

this, he went to Kailasa. The god Maheshvara was happy to see his brother. [912] He arose and came forward to embrace him. But he did not desire this and said, "You deviate from the path." [913] At this, the god became angry. He raised his trident and with fiery eyes, got ready to kill him. But the goddess [914] fell down at his feet and comforted him with her words. After this, he [915] went to Vaikuntha, where the god Janardana was. He was lying down on Shri's lap and he kicked him on the chest with his foot. The illustrious one, the destination of the virtuous, stood up, along with Lakshmi. He got down from his own couch and bowed his head down before the sage. He said, "O brahmana rishi! Welcome. Rest on this seat for a while. O lord! You should pardon us. We did not know that you were going to come. Please purify me, my world and the guardians of the world who are with me with the water that has washed your feet. It is like a tirtha that purifies the tirthas. O father! O great sage! Your feet are exceedingly soft." Saying this, he massaged the brahmana's feet with his hands. "Till today, the illustrious Lakshmi has single-mindedly served me. Now that your foot has purified my chest, the goddess of prosperity will reside there." [916] The lord of Vaikuntha addressed Bhrigu in these solemn words. He [917] was delighted, satisfied and silent. He was overwhelmed with devotion and tears flowed from his eyes. O king! He again returned to the sacrifice being conducted by the sages who knew about the brahman. In detail, Bhrigu described the experience he had been through. Hearing this, the sages were amazed and their doubts were dispelled. They developed a great deal of devotion towards Vishnu, the one who confers tranquility and freedom from fear. Dharma, jnana and non-attachment emanate directly from him and so do the eight kinds of siddhis that cleanse the atman of impurities. He is said to be the supreme destination for virtuous ones and sages who desire nothing, tranquil and impartial in outlook, having cast aside their staffs. [918] His beloved form is made out of sattva and he worships brahmanas as divinities. Tranquil ones, accomplished in intelligence, worship him, wishing for no benedictions. Through his maya, based on the gunas, he creates three kinds of forms—rakshasa, asura and *sura*. [919] Of these, sattva is the means for attaining success and purification. To remove the doubts of men, the brahmanas along the banks

of the Sarasvati came to this conclusion. They served Purusha's lotus feet and found a destination with him.'

Suta said, 'This account about the supreme being emanated from the fragrant lotus mouth of the sage's son. [920] It is glorious nectar that destroys the fear of samsara. If a traveller [921] constantly drinks it in, using his ears as cups, all the exhaustion from his journey is destroyed.'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'O descendant of the Bharata lineage! On one occasion, in Dvaravati, a brahmana's wife gave birth to a son. However, as soon as he was born and touched the ground, he died. The brahmana took the dead infant and came to the king's [922] gate. Distressed in his mind and suffering, he lamented in these words. "My child has died and left because of the evil deeds of a kshatra-bandhu. [923] He hates brahmanas. He is deceitful in his intelligence. He is greedy and is attached to material objects. He sports and indulges in violence. He has not been able to conquer his senses and his conduct is wicked. Subjects who serve him will suffer. They will always be poor and miserable." In this way, the brahmana rishi went through a similar suffering for a second and a third child. He left them at the king's gate and chanted the same lamentation. On one occasion, when he was in Keshava's presence, Arjuna heard the brahmana, when his ninth child had died. He asked him, "O brahmana! Is there no one in your residence who can wield a bow? These kshatra-bandhus are like brahmanas undertaking a sacrifice. [924] If brahmanas have to grieve because they lose their wealth, wives and sons, these are actors who are seeking to subsist in the garb of royalty. O illustrious one! You are suffering and I will protect your offspring. If I am unable to accomplish my pledge, I will enter the fire and atone for my sins." The brahmana replied, "Samkarshana, Vasudeva, the supreme archer Pradyumna and the unrivalled charioteer, Aniruddha, have been unable to save me. The lords of the world have found this task to be impossible. You are foolishly speaking about this feat. We do not believe you." Arjuna said, "O brahmana! I am not Samkarshana, Krishna, or Krishna's son. My name is Arjuna and my bow is Gandiva. O brahmana! Do not slight my valour, which has satisfied the three-eyed one. [925] O lord! I will defeat Death in a battle and bring your sons back." O scorcher of ene-

mies! The brahmana was thus assured by Phalguna. Having heard about Partha's valour, he was happy and returned to his own house.

'When the time for his wife's delivery arrived, the excellent and suffering brahmana told Arjuna, "Save my child from Death." He touched water and purified himself, bowing down to Maheshvara. He strung Gandiva and remembered the divine weapons. He invoked arrows with many weapons and covered the delivery chamber from all sides. Above, below and diagonally, Partha created a cage made out of arrows. The brahmana's wife gave birth to a son who cried repeatedly. However, he suddenly vanished into the sky, along with his body. In Krishna's presence, the brahmana reprimanded Vijaya. [926] "Behold. I was a fool to trust you. You boasted, but are impotent. When Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Rama and Keshava are unable to save a person, who else is capable of protecting him? Shame on Arjuna. Shame on that boastful one's bow. When touched by destiny, it is only a foolish and evil-minded person who thinks of bringing someone back." The brahmana rishi cursed him in this way. Phalguna resorted to his learning and instantly went to Samyamani, [927] where the illustrious Yama was. Unable to see the brahmana's son there, with his weapons raised, he went to the cities of other lords—Indra, Agni, Nairrita, Soma, Vayu, Varuna, rasatala and the vault of heaven. However, not having obtained the brahmana's son anywhere, he was unable to fulfil his promise. Therefore, he got ready to enter the fire. However, Krishna restrained him and addressed him in these words. "Do not degrade yourself in this way. I will show you the brahmana's sons. We will soon establish our spotless deeds among men." The illustrious lord addressed Arjuna in this way. Along with him, he ascended his divine chariot and left for the western direction.

'It crossed the seven dvipas, the seven rivers and the seven ranges of mountains that separate them. It then crossed Lokaloka [928] and entered extremely great darkness. O bull among the Bharata lineage! The horses, Shaibya, Sugriva, Meghapushpa and Balahaka, lost their sense of direction in that darkness and could not proceed. Seeing this, the illustrious Krishna, the great yogi and the lord of all the lords of yoga, sent his own chakra on ahead, blazing like one thousand suns. With its great and radiant energy, it

cut through that extremely terrible, dense and great darkness. Just as Rama's arrows released from the bow cut through the enemy army, Sudarshana penetrated with the speed of thought. Through the path created by the chakra through the darkness, beyond all this, Phalguna saw a pervasive, infinite and dazzling light. His eyes were pained by this and he closed them. After this, he entered water that was buffeted by extremely powerful winds. The resultant waves were like ornaments. He saw a supremely resplendent and wonderful mansion there. There were thousands of pillars, radiant with gems. The great and wonderful serpent, Ananta, was there. There were brilliant gems on each of his one thousand hoods. This radiance reflected on his two thousand fiery eyes. He was white, like the white mountain, [929] but his neck and tongues were dark. He saw the lord, the great and supreme being, Purushottama, reclining happily on the coils of the serpent. His beautiful complexion was like that of a cloud. His beautiful garment was yellow. His face was pleasant and his eyes were long and beautiful. His diadem and earrings were studded with many clusters of precious gems. The illumination from this reflected off his dense locks of hair, with thousands of strands. His eight handsome arms were long. He wore the Koustubha gem and the shrivatsa mark was on his chest. He was adorned with a garland of wild flowers. The lord was served by his own attendants, Sunanda and Nanda being the foremost. His own weapons, chakra and the others, stood around him in personified form. *Pushti, shri, kirti, ajaya* [930] and all the other potencies served the supreme Parameshthi. Achyuta bowed down to himself, in the form of Ananta. Jishnu [931] was astonished at the sight. Both of them [932] stood there, their hands joined in salutation. The lord, the controller of all the other Parameshthis, [933] smiled and addressed them in a deep voice. "I brought the brahmana's sons here because I wished to see the two of you. You are my portions, born on earth to protect dharma. When you have killed the asuras and the earth has been divested of her burden, you will again return into me. The two of you are the rishis Nara and Narayana and have already accomplished all your wishes. O bulls among rishis! However, for the sake of instructing people, you are there, observing dharma." The two Krishnas [934] were thus instructed by the illustrious Parameshthi. They

uttered “Oum” [935] and bowed down before the lord. They took the brahmana’s sons with them and rejoicing, returned to their own abode along the route they had come by. They gave the brahmana his sons, in the same age and the same appearance that they had been lost. Having seen Vishnu’s abode, Partha was greatly surprised. He decided that a man can only exhibit that much of manliness that Krishna seeks to favour him with. There are many other such deeds of valour that he [936] exhibited in this world. Like an ordinary person, he enjoyed material objects and undertook potent sacrifices. The illustrious one resorted to his own supremacy and showered down all the objects of desire on subjects, brahmanas and others, just like Indra showering down at the appropriate time. He slew the kings who were addicted to adharma and had the others killed through Arjuna and the others. Through Dharma’s son [937] and others, he easily established the path of dharma.’

Chapter 10(90)

Shri-Shuka said, ‘Shri’s consort was residing happily in his own city of Dvaraka. It was full of every kind of prosperity and wealth and the bulls among the Vrishnis. The women were attired in excellent garments. They were beautiful because of newly bloomed youth. As they played with balls in their mansions, they were like flashes of lightning. The roads were always crowded with crazy elephants exuding musth, ornamented soldiers and horses and chariots that blazed with gold. The gardens and groves were filled with large numbers of blossoming trees. From every side, the sounds of bees humming and birds calling could be heard. He was the sole beloved of sixteen thousand wives and enjoyed himself with them in their extremely expensive houses, assuming as many wonderful forms. The pure water in those homes was fragrant with pollen from blooming water lilies, white lotuses, night lotuses and day lotuses. Flocks of birds called. The powerful one immersed himself in the waters of those pools and amused himself. When the women embraced him, his body was smeared with the kunkuma

from their breasts. Accompanied by the sound of drums, kettledrums and larger drums, gandharvas sang his praises. Delighted, sutas, magadhas and bandis played on veenas and other musical instruments. The women laughed and used syringes to sprinkle Achyuta with water. Like a king of yakshas with female yakshas, he sprinkled them back and played with them. Because their garments were wet, the region around their thighs and breasts became exposed. Wishing to take away the syringe and sprinkle him, they embraced their beloved and flowers were loosened from the braids in their hair. Desire was ignited in them and because of their smiling faces, they were resplendent. Krishna's garland was smeared with the kunkuma from their breasts. Since he was engaged in sporting, his locks of hair were dishevelled. He repeatedly sprinkled the young women and they sprinkled him back. He sported with them, like a king of elephants with female elephants. Krishna and the women gave the ornaments and garments used in sporting, [938] to the male and female performers who earned a living from singing and the playing of musical instruments. While Krishna was engaged in sporting in this way, his gait, conversation, glances, smiles, jesting, joking and embraces stole the hearts of the women. With their minds on Mukunda, they were like those who were mad and dumb. Their thoughts were on the lotus-eyed one. I will tell you about the words they spoke. Listen.

'The queens said, "O female osprey! Why are you lamenting? Why are you without sleep and why can't you rest? It is night in the world. The lord has covered his understanding and has gone to sleep. O friend! Like us, has your heart also been pierced deeply by the generous and smiling glances of the one whose eyes are like lotuses? O female chakravaka! You close your eyes in the night, but cannot see your beloved. Therefore, you are weeping piteously. Like us, have you obtained Achutya's servitude? Do you want to wear the garland that touched his feet in the braids of your hair? O ocean! You are always roaring. You do not get to sleep in the night and suffer from insomnia. Is that because Mukunda has taken away your signs? [939] Have you been reduced to a state from which it is impossible to recover? O moon! You have been seized by the powerful disease of consumption. You

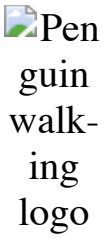
have become so emaciated that your beams can no longer dispel the darkness. Like us, can you no longer remember what Mukunda told you? It seems to us that your power of speech has been numbed. O wind that blows from the Malaya mountain! What disagreeable act have we performed towards you? Our hearts have been shattered by Govinda's glances. Why are you igniting desire in them? O handsome cloud! You are indeed loved by the Indra among the Yadavas, adorned with the shrivatsa mark. Like us, bound to him in bonds of love, you are meditating. Like us, your heart must be distraught and extremely anxious. Repeatedly remembering this, you are shedding profuse tears. Association with him leads to misery. O cuckoo! Your notes are sweet. Your voice can revive those who are dead. You are uttering sounds that have been spoken by our beloved. [940] What can I do now to please you? Tell me. O mountain! O one who is extensive in intelligence! You do not move or speak. You must be thinking about something of great import. Or perhaps, just like us, you desire to hold the feet of Vasudeva's son against your breasts? [941] O wives of the ocean! [942] Your lakes have dried up now and the beauty of your lotuses has been lost, just as we are completely dried up now. We can no longer obtain the beloved glances of our husband, the lord of Madhu. Our hearts have been deceived. O swan! Welcome. Please be seated here and drink some milk. O dear one! Tell us about Shouri's account. Indeed, we know that you are his messenger. Is the unvanquished one well? Does he remember what he told us long ago? His affections are fickle. Why should we worship him? O inferior servant of the one who satisfies desires! Tell him to come here without Shri. Is she the only woman who can serve him faithfully?"'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'Krishna is the lord of the lords of yoga and behaving with such sentiments, Madhava's wives attained the supreme destination. His numerous deeds are sung about and he attracts the mind of women who have only heard about him. What need be said about those who have seen him? He is the preceptor of the universe. Taking him to be a husband, they lovingly served him, by massaging his feet and doing other things. How can one describe the austerities they must have performed? He is the destination of the virtuous and he observed the dharma spoken about

in the Vedas. He repeatedly demonstrated how dharma, artha and kama can be pursued, even in the state of a householder. In his status of a householder, Krishna performed supreme dharma. He had more than sixteen thousand and one hundred queens. O king! Among these jewels among women, eight were the chief, Rukmini and the others. I have already described them progressively, along with their sons. Through each of the wives, Krishna had ten sons, who were exactly like him. The lord's progress is invincible. Among these large numbers of valiant sons, eighteen were maharathas. Their fame was pervasive. Hear about their names from me. They were Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Diptiman, Bhanu, Samba, Madhu, Brihadbhanu, Chitrabhanu, Vrika, Aruna, Pushkara, Vedabahu, Shrutadeva, Sunandana, Chitrabahu, Virupa, Kavi and Nyagrodha. O Indra among kings! These were the sons of Madhu's enemy. Among them, the first was Pradyumna, Rukmini's son, and he was like his father. The maharatha married Rukmi's daughter. [943] Her son was Aniruddha, who possessed the strength of ten thousand elephants. He [944] was the son of Rukmi's daughter and he married the daughter of Rukmi's son. [945] Their son was Vajra and he was the only one who was left after the clash with the clubs. [946] Vajra's son was Pratibahu and Pratibahu's son was Subahu. Subahu's son was Shantasena and Shantasena's son was Shatasena. No one born in this lineage was poor and there was no one who did not have many children. There was no one who was limited in lifespan. There was no one who was limited in valour. No one was born who was not devoted to brahmanas. Many men born in the Yadu lineage were famous for their deeds. O king! Even in tens of thousands of years, one is incapable of enumerating them. It has been heard that three crores, eighty eight thousand and eight hundred teachers were employed to teach the sons of the Yadu lineage. Who is capable of enumerating the great-souled Yadavas? Ahuka had ten thousand times ten thousand lakhs. [947] There were extremely terrible daityas who were killed in the battle between the gods and the asuras. They were born as humans and were insolent, making the subjects suffer. O king! To chatise them, Hari asked the gods to be born in Yadu's lineage. There were more than one hundred and one branches in the lineage. The illustrious and powerful lord, Hari, was their authori-

ty. Among all the Yadavas, those who followed him flourished. The minds of the Vrishnis were so immersed in Krishna that they were not conscious of their own selves when sleeping, seating, walking, conversing, playing, bathing and performing other deeds. O king! The divine river [948] is a tirtha because it washed his feet. However, when he was born in the lineage of the Yadus, her fame was diminished. Those who hated him and those who loved him attained union with him. He is unvanquished and supreme. Others make efforts to obtain Shri, but she is only his. Whenever his name is heard or spoken about, it destroys everything inauspicious. Krishna created the dharma for different gotras. It is wonderful that he wields the wheel of time as a chakra to remove the burdens of the earth. Though he is spoken about as the one who was born from Devaki, the victorious one resides in all people. Though he was served by the best among the Yadu lineage, it was his own arms that destroyed adharma. For everything mobile and immobile, he destroys sins. His handsome and smiling face ignited the god of love among the women in the city of Vraja. For the sake of protecting his own path, [949] in his pastimes, he assumes different forms and imitates conduct that is appropriate to those. The deeds of the supreme one among the Yadus destroy all the consequences of karma. If a person desires to follow in his footsteps, he should hear about these. Through constant hearing, chanting and meditating on Mukunda's beautiful account, with increasing devotion, a mortal person obtains his abode. Death, which is irresistible, loses its force there. For the sake of obtaining him, from ordinary homes people went to the forest, and so did kings.'

This ends the Tenth Skandha.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Eleventh Skandha

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Chapter 11(1)

Shri-Shuka said, 'With Rama, and surrounded by the Yadus, Krishna killed daityas. To reduce the burden of the earth, he suddenly ignited the rising dissension. On several occasions, the sons of Pandu were angered by their rivals—the deceitful gambling, insults, the seizing of the hair [950] and other things. Using these as triggers, the lord removed the earth's burden by destroying the kings who had assembled on either side. The Yadus were protected by his own arms and they were used to destroy the armies of the kings, a burden on earth. The immeasurable one then thought, "Some may say that the earth's burden has gone, but I do not think so. The intolerable lineage of the Yadavas still remains. No one else can ever defeat them, through any means. Because they seek shelter with me, their powers have always been unrestricted. I will engender conflict within the lineage of the Yadus and they will be destroyed, like a bamboo grove consumed by the fire. I can then peacefully return to my abode." O king! The lord's resolutions always came true and he decided in this way. Using the pretext of the curse pronounced by brahmanas, the lord withdrew his own family. His own form brought beauty to the world and stole the eyes of men away from everything else. The minds of those who heard his words remembered them. His gaits and acts attracted people. His glory spread through excellent shlokas. These allowed people to easily cross over the darkness. The lord thought that he would return to his own abode.'

The king asked, 'The minds of the Vrishnis were immersed in Krishna. They were generous and devoted to brahmanas. They always served the aged. Why did the brahmanas curse them? O supreme among brahmanas!

What was the reason for the curse and what was its nature? They were united. How could there have been dissension among them? Please tell me everything.'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'His radiant form was an accumulation of all that was beautiful. Having performed extremely auspicious deeds on earth, his wishes were accomplished. The one who was pervasive in his deeds enjoyed himself in his abode. [951] He remained there because a small task still needed to be completed. He desired to destroy his lineage. He accomplished extremely auspicious and sacred deeds in this world. Chanting about these deeds takes away the impurities of kali yuga. In his form as the Destroyer, he resided in the house of the lord of the Yadus. [952] The sages took his leave and went to Pindaraka. [953] They were Vishvamitra, Asita, Kanva, Durvasa, Bhrigu, Angiras, Kashyapa, Vamadeva, Atri, Vasishtha, Narada and others. While playing, young boys born in the Yadu lineage approached them. They clasped their feet and asked them a question in mock humility. They attired Samba, Jambavati's son, in a woman's garments and asked, "O brahmanas! This black-eyed lady is expecting and wants to ask you. O ones infallible in vision! However, she is ashamed of asking you directly. She will deliver soon and desires to have a son. Can you tell us about the delivery?" [954] O king! Thus deceived, the sages became angry and replied, "O foolish ones! She will give birth to a club that will destroy the lineage." Hearing these words, they were extremely terrified. They uncovered Samba's stomach and saw that there was indeed a club made out of iron. "We are unfortunate. What have we done? What are people going to say?" Completely confused, they returned to their homes, taking the club with them. The radiance had vanished from their faces. They took it to the king's assembly and in the presence of all the Yadavas, [955] reported what had happened. O king! The residents of Dvaraka heard about the invincible curse of the brahmanas and saw the club. They were astounded, scared and terrified. Ahuka, [956] the king of the Yadus, had the club pulverized. He had the fragments, along with a small bit of iron that remained, flung into the ocean. A fish swallowed that bit of iron. The fragments were carried to the shore by the waves. Stuck there, they grew into *eraka* reeds. Along with other fish caught by fisher-

men from the ocean, that fish was also caught. A hunter [957] used that bit of iron to fashion his arrowhead. The illustrious lord knew everything, but he did not wish to counter the curse of the brahmanas. In his form as the Destroyer, he sanctioned it.'

Chapter 11(2)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O extender of the Kuru lineage! Dvaravati was protected by Govinda's arms. Constantly eager to worship Krishna, Narada resided there for some time. O king! Mukunda's lotus feet are worshipped by the best among the immortals. Which person with senses, always confronted by death, will not worship them? Once, the devarshi went to Vasudeva's [958] house. He was worshipped. When he was comfortably seated, he [959] greeted him and addressed him in these words. Vasudeva said, "O illustrious one! Your visits are for the welfare of all embodied beings who are distressed. You are like a father for those who follow Uttamashloka's path. The activities of the gods bring happiness and unhappiness to beings. However, virtuous ones like you, who have their atmans in Achyuta, only bring happiness. The gods are like shadows. The gods reciprocate according to the acts used to worship them. [960] However, virtuous ones are always compassionate towards the distressed. O brahmana! I wish to ask you about *bhagavata dharma*. [961] On faithfully listening to this, a mortal person is freed from all kinds of fear. The infinite one bestows emancipation. In an earlier birth on earth, I worshipped him. However, confounded by the god's maya, I did not ask for emancipation, but for offspring. O one excellent in vows! There are many kinds of hardships. Instruct me, so that I can directly and easily be freed from fears from every direction." O king! The devarshi was thus questioned by the intelligent Vasudeva. He remembered Hari's qualities and, delighted, spoke to him.

'Narada said, "O bull among the Satvatas! You have correctly asked about bhagavata dharma, which purifies the universe. If this dharma is heard, recited, meditated on, accepted or praised, it instantly purifies those

who hate the gods or creatures in the universe. The illustrious one is supremely auspicious. Hearing about him or chanting about him is sacred. You have now reminded me about my god, Narayana. In this connection, an ancient history is recounted, about a conversation between the great-souled Videha and the sons of Rishabha. Svayambhuva Manu had a son named Priyavrata. His son was Agnidhra, Agnidhra's son was Nabhi and Nabhi's son was known as Rishabha, spoken of as a portion of Vasudeva. He descended on earth to teach about *moksha dharma*. He had one hundred sons and all of them possessed knowledge about the brahman. The eldest among them was Bharata and he was devoted to Narayana. It is after him that this wonderful *varsha* goes by the name of Bharata. Having enjoyed objects of pleasure, he gave them up. He left home and performed austerities for Hari. After having worshipped him, he obtained his state after three births. Nine [962] became lords of the nine dvipas that were all around. Eighty-one were brahmanas and initiated the various rituals. The remaining nine were extremely fortunate sages and explained the ultimate objective. They were accomplished in knowledge about the atman. They were mendicants who exerted themselves, using the wind as a garment. [963] They were Kavi, Hari, Antariksha, Prabhuddha, Pippalayana, Avirhotra, Drumila, Chamasa and Karabhajana. They visualized the form of the universe, cause and effect, gross and subtle, as no different from the atman of the illustrious one and roamed around earth. They were unrestricted in their movements and went to the worlds of the gods, the Siddhas, the Sadhyas, the gandharvas, the yakshas, men, the kinnaras and serpents. They roamed around freely, as they willed, in the worlds of sages, charanas, the lords among the bhutas, vidyadharas, brahmanas and cattle. Once, the great-souled Nimi [964] was performing a sacrifice in Ajanabha, [965] following the instructions of the rishis. Wandering around as they willed, they went there. O king! Those great devotees of the illustrious one were like the sun. On seeing them, everyone, the performer of the sacrifice, the sacrificial fires and the brahmanas, stood up. The king of Videha knew that they were devoted to the illustrious one. Delighted, he offered them appropriate seats and worshipped them. Those

nine blazed in their own radiance and were like Brahma's sons. [966] Extremely happy, the king bowed down in humility and asked them."

'Videha asked, "I think that you are the direct attendants of the illustrious one, Madhu's enemy. Those with Vishnu inside them roam around, purifying the worlds. Among embodied beings, the status of a human is extremely difficult to obtain, though it is also fragile. But even among those, I think it is extremely difficult to find those who manage to see those loved by Vaikuntha. O supremely fortunate ones! O ones without blemish! Therefore, I am asking you. For men in this world, even half a kshana's [967] association with the virtuous is a treasure. If you think that we are capable of listening to bhagavata dharma, please tell us about it. He is devoted to those who seek shelter with him and is ready to give up his own self."

'Narada continued, "O Vasudeva! Those great ones were thus asked by Nimi. Happy, they honoured the king, the officiating priests and the assistant priests and spoke.

'"'Kavi said, 'He is the atman of the universe. In this world, one's intelligence is constantly agitated, because one identifies the atman with the transient. Achyuta's lotus feet grant freedom from fear. If one constantly worships them, I think there can be no fear. The means and techniques for easily realizing the atman and obtaining the illustrious one have been described, even by ignorant men. Know that as bhagavata dharma. O king! A man who resorts to this is never distracted. Even if he runs with his eyes closed, he will never trip or fall down. [968] Everything done with the body, words, mind, senses, intelligence, the atman and by following one's own nature, [969] must be offered to the supreme Narayana. [970] Because of loss of memory, there is misidentification and one turns away from the direction of the lord, becoming absorbed in the second. [971] That leads to fear. An intelligent person knows that this is maya. He devotedly worships the absolute lord, the guru and divinity for his atman. This manifestation of duality has no real existence. The intelligence experiences it like the wishes confronted in dreams. The mind leads to doubts about what should be done and what should not be done. An intelligent person brings the mind under control and fearlessness results from that. One must hear about the extremely auspi-

cious birth and deeds in this world of the one who wields a chakra in his hand. One must sing about those names and their significances. One should roam around unattached and without any embarrassment, sing about these. If one follows this vow, his names and deeds come to be loved. Attachment develops and his heart melts. He laughs loudly. He cries, or becomes agitated. He sings and dances like a mad person. He does not care about the external world. The devotee bows down to everything, taking everything to be no different from Hari's body—the sky, the air, the fire, water, the earth, the stellar bodies, living creatures, the directions, trees and others, rivers and oceans—all that exists. For a person who surrenders himself, three things occur simultaneously: devotion to the supreme lord, experiencing him and non-attachment towards everything else. It is like a person who is in the process of eating. With every mouthful, there is satisfaction, nourishment and elimination of hunger. Thus, the devotee constantly worships Achyuta's feet. There is devotion, non-attachment towards everything else and awareness about the illustrious one. O king! In this way, a person who is devoted to the illustrious one directly experiences supreme serenity.'

'"The king [972] asked, 'Tell me more about the kind of man who follows bhagavata dharma. How does he behave? How does he speak? What are the signs of a person loved by the illustrious one?'

'"Hari said, 'If a person is suffused with the illustrious one, he sees the illustrious one in all creatures and all creatures in the atman of the illustrious one. He is superior among those who are devoted to the illustrious one. A person who is devoted to the illustrious one, friendly towards his devotees, compassionate towards foolish ones [973] and indifferent towards those who hate him, [974] is a medium kind of devotee. A person who worships Hari's image faithfully, [975] but does not honour his devotees or others, is said to be an ordinary kind of devotee. The senses come in contact with the objects of the senses. If a person is not delighted or unhappy with this, recognizing this to be Vishnu's maya, he is supreme among devotees of the illustrious one. If a person remembers Hari and is not confounded by the body, the senses, prana, the mind, the intelligence, birth, death, hunger, fear, thirst and other hardships associated with the dharma of samsara, he is the

foremost devotee of the illustrious one. If Vasudeva is the supreme shelter for someone, the desire for the seeds of karma do not arise in his mind. Such a person is supreme among devotees of the illustrious one. Hari loves a person who has no sense of ahamkara and is not attached to notions of noble birth, karma, varna, ashrama and other things associated with the body in this world. If a person does not have any sense of differentiation between "mine" and "someone else's", vis-à-vis the body or possessions, and is serene and impartial towards all creatures, he is a supreme devotee of the illustrious one. Gods and others, and those who have not conquered their atmans, seek out the illustrious one's lotus feet. If a person's memory is not disturbed and if he does not waver from those feet for a lava [976] or half a nimesha, even for the sake of lordship of the three worlds, he is Vishnu's foremost devotee. The illustrious one's strides have accomplished deeds of valour. The radiance from the jewels of nails on his feet are like cool moonbeams and destroy the torment in the heart. How can a person who worships him suffer? This is like the power of the rising moon dispelling the sun's heat. A person is said to be a foremost devotee of the illustrious one if Hari does not leave his heart, his lotus feet firmly and directly bound there by bonds of love. Even if he is called accidentally, he destroys the mass of sins.'"'

Chapter 11(3)

"'"The king [977] said, 'The supreme lord Vishnu's maya confounds. O illustrious ones! We wish to know about this maya. Please tell us. I am tormented by the miseries of samsara. I am not satisfied from hearing from you about Hari's account, which is like amrita. It is like medication for the sufferings of a mortal being.'

"'Antariksha said, 'O mighty-armed one! He is the atman in all creatures. He is the original being. From his own parts, he has created these creatures, superior and inferior, out of the gross elements, so that they can enjoy objects of the senses or realize the atman. [978] The beings are created out of the

five elements and having created them, he enters them. He is one, but divides himself into ten, and makes them engage with the gunas. [979] Goaded by the lord, the jivatman uses the senses to enjoy the objects of the senses. He identifies his atman with what has been created and thereby becomes attached. The embodied being is an instrument and uses the senses of action to engage in karma. Accepting the fruits of past karma, he whirls around, in joy and misery. Thus, the being follows towards many inauspicious destinations determined by karma. From the creation of the universe to its end, he helplessly experiences many births and deaths. When the end of the elements is imminent, the one without a beginning and without an end assumes the form of time and withdraws the manifest objects and gunas into his unmanifest atman. At that time, the earth is ravaged by a terrible drought that lasts for one hundred years. At that time, the sun's heat is heightened by time and scorches the three worlds. From Samkarshana's [980] mouth, a fire is initiated from the bottom of patala. Aided by the wind, the flames rise upwards and, increasing, burn down the directions. Large masses of clouds known as samvartaka shower down for one hundred years. The flow of the downpour is as thick as the trunks of elephants. The entire universe is deluged in water. O king! Vairaja Purusha [981] abandons the universe and enters the subtle and the unmanifest, like fire, when the kindling has been consumed. [982] The wind robs the earth of its property of smell, which is then transformed into water. The wind also robs water of its liquid nature and it is transformed into fire. The darkness robs fire of its form and it merges into the wind. Space robs wind of its attribute of touch and the wind merges into space. In the form of time, the atman robs space of its attribute and it merges into *tamasika ahamkara*. [983] O king! The senses and intelligence merge into *rajasika ahamkara*. The mind and divinities of the senses merge into *sattvika ahamkara*. Ahamkara, along with its attributes, [984] merges into Mahat. [985] This is the maya of the illustrious one, which leads to creation, preservation and destruction. It has three hues. [986] I have described it to you. What else do you wish to hear?'

'"The king [987] asked, 'O maharshi! Those who have not cleansed their atmans find it impossible to overcome the lord's maya. How can those with

gross intelligence [988] easily tide over it? Please describe that.'

'"Prabuddha said, 'Men engaged in sexual intercourse [989] start acts with the objective of destroying unhappiness and enjoying happiness. They should note that the consequences can be quite contrary. Wealth is always the cause of hardship. It is extremely difficult to obtain and is like death for one's own self. What happiness is ensured from fickle objects like homes, children, relatives and animals? In that way, one should know that worlds hereafter, obtained as a result of karma, are also destructible. Like vassals to an emperor, these are characterized by rivalry among equals and jealousy towards superiors. Therefore, a curious person who desires the greatest benefit must resort to a guru who is accomplished in explaining the supreme, is detached, and has realized the brahman. Treating the guru as a divinity and like one's own self, bhagavata dharma must be learnt. Without any deceit, one must serve him. When Hari, the paramatman, is satisfied, he will bestow realization about the atman. In the beginning, the mind must be detached from everything and one must associate with the virtuous. As is appropriate, he must be compassionate, friendly and respectful towards all creatures. There must be purity, austerities, forbearance, silence, studying, uprightness, brahmacharya, non-violence and equanimity when one is faced with the opposites. [990] He must look on everything as a manifestation of the lord's atman. He must dwell in solitude, without a fixed place of residence. He must be detached, wearing tattered rags [991] as garments. He must be satisfied with whatever is obtained. He must be faithful towards texts that are about the illustrious one, but must not be contemptuous of others. He must control his mind, speech and deeds, observing truthfulness, control of the mind and control of the senses. He must hear, chant and meditate on Hari's extraordinary deeds and his birth, deeds and qualities. All his activities, sacrifices, donations, meditation, conduct and everything that his mind loves, wives, sons, homes and life, must be dedicated to the supreme. He must be friendly towards men who have accepted Krishna as their atman and protector. He must serve both [992] and great and virtuous men. He must converse with others about the illustrious one's purifying glory. Through mutual love, they will find mutual satisfaction and their mutual atmans will find detach-

ment. He must remember and remind others about Hari, the one who dispels the flood of sins. Devotion leads to the awakening of further devotion and because of the ecstasy, the body hair stands up. Immersed in thoughts about Achyuta, sometimes, he cries. Sometimes, he laughs. Sometimes, delighted, he speaks in superhuman ways. Sometimes, he dances. Sometimes, he sings. Sometimes, he imitates the one without birth. Sometimes, withdrawn and immersed in the supreme, he is silent. In this way, by learning about bhagavata dharma, devotion is awakened. Submerged in Narayana, he crosses over the maya, which is impossible to overcome.'

'"The king [993] asked, 'O supreme among those who know about the brahman! The brahman and the paramatman is also known by the name of Narayana. Do they represent the same transcendental being? You should tell us about this.'

'"Pippalayana said, 'O Indra among men! He is without cause, but is the cause of creation, preservation and destruction. He is the truth who exists in the states of sleeping, being awake and sushupti, and also in the state beyond them. [994] Know him to be the supreme one who animates the body, the senses, the breath of life and the mind and makes them carry out their functions. Sparks cannot illuminate the fire. Like that, the mind, speech, sight, intelligence, the breath of life and the senses cannot penetrate him. The words of the Vedas can only describe the atman indirectly, not directly. [995] But in its absence, even that negative description would not have been possible. In the beginning, there was only one. But it assumed the three modes of sattva, rajas and tamas. With rajas, it became Sutratma. With sattva, it became Mahat. With tamas, it became ahamkara, enveloping the jivatman. [996] The brahman, with diverse forms and powers, is radiant in jnana, [997] the senses, the objects of the senses and the fruits. It is manifest in the gross and the subtle and in everything that is beyond both of these. The atman was not born. Nor will it die. It does not grow, or decay. It is the witness to the progress of time in bodies. [998] It is everywhere. It is eternal. It is the pure consciousness that does not disappear. It is like prana in the body. Because of the power of the senses, this appears to be many, but is one. In whatever state the jivatman is born in, from an egg, from wombs, from seeds or from

sweat, prana follows accordingly. When the aggregate of the senses and ahamkara are in a state of deep sleep, it exists and can be remembered on waking up. If, with intense devotion, a person desires to seek the feet of the one with a lotus in his navel, he cleanses all the impurities that are in his heart as a result of gunas and karma. In that purified state, he perceives the truth about the atman. He directly experiences it, just as the sunlight is visible to a person with clear vision.'

'"The king said, 'Tell us about karma yoga, through which, a man can cleanse himself. He can quickly eliminate the effects of karma and attain a supreme state of *naishkarma*. [999] In my father's [1000] presence, I had earlier asked the rishis who are Brahma's sons. However, they did not reply. Please tell me the reason for that.'

'"Avirhotra said, 'Karma, *akarma* and *vikarma* are spoken about in the Vedas and are beyond the purview of ordinary discourse. [1001] The Vedas emanate from the lord's atman and even wise people are confused about these. [1002] Like instructing a child, the Vedas speak about something other than what they are taken to imply. [1003] Like the medicine, the objective of karma is to free oneself from karma. If an ignorant person has not conquered his senses and does not act in accordance with what the Vedas have said, he follows adharma. By engaging in vikarma, he goes from one death to another death. The acts spoken about in the Vedas must be performed without attachment and offered to the lord. It is through this that one obtains the success of naishkarma. The fruits spoken about in the sacred texts are only for purposes of making it attractive. If a person wants to swiftly sever the bonds of the heart, he should follow the rituals [1004] or what is spoken about in tantra, and worship the god Keshava, the paramatman. Having obtained the preceptor's favours and having been instructed about agama, he must worship the great being in a form that he himself finds attractive. [1005] He must purify himself and be seated, facing the deity. He must cleanse himself through pranayama and other techniques. He must purify the gross body through *nyasa*. [1006] Having protected himself in this way, he must worship Hari. He must first purify whatever objects of worship have been obtained, the physical objects that are to be offered, the ground, his own self, his

mind, the image and the seat, sprinkling them with water. He must control himself and keep padya and the other objects of worship nearby. He must perform nyasa in the heart and other parts of the body and worship, using the seed mantra. He must worship the limbs of the image, the emblems, [1007] the attendants [1008] and their personified forms, using their respective mantras, offering padya, arghya and *achamaniya*. [1009] The image must be bathed and adorned with garments and ornaments. Following the recommended methods, he must worship the image with fragrances, garlands, unbroken grain, flowers, incense, lamps and other offerings. Having worshipped in this way, he must prostrate himself before Hari. He must immerse himself and meditate on Hari's form, worshipping him. He must place the remainder of the offerings on his head and respectfully restore the image to the proper place. In this way, if a person worships the lord in the form of the sun, water, the guest and within his own heart, he is swiftly liberated.'"'

Chapter 11(4)

'"'The king [1010] said, 'According to his own wishes, Hari takes different births and undertakes many kinds of deeds. He has performed them, is performing them and will perform them. Please tell us about those.'

'"'Drumila replied, 'Ananta's qualities are infinite. A person who seeks to enumerate them is childish in his intelligence. In the course of time, it may be possible to count all the particles of dust on earth. However, it is impossible to count all the potencies of that reservoir. He himself created the five elements out of his own self. Having created this universe, which is like his own body, he entered it, using a portion of his own self. Narayana, the original divinity, thus came to be known as Purusha. The arrangement of the three worlds is based on his body. It is his senses that make both kinds of senses [1011] of embodied beings function. Jnana comes from him. Physical strength, the strength of the senses and their activities flow from his breathing. Through sattva and the others, he is the original agent behind creation,

preservation and destruction. In the beginning, for the sake of creation, he used rajas to manifest himself as Brahma. For preservation, as the lord of sacrifices who protects brahmanas and the ordinances of dharma, he is there as Vishnu. [1012] Using tamas, he is Rudra for purposes of destruction. For creation, preservation and destruction, the original Purusha is thus always there among subjects.

"'"The serene and supreme rishi, Nara-Narayana, was born as the son of Dharma and Murti, Daksha's daughter. He practised karma and spoke about the signs of naishkarma. He exists even today and noble rishis serve at his feet. Indra suspected that he [1013] might covet his abode. Therefore, he engaged Kama and his companions. Along with large numbers of apsaras, the spring and an extremely gentle breeze, he [1014] went to the place known as Badari. Not knowing about his greatness, he pierced him with arrows, in the form of the glances of the women. The original being knew that the crime had been committed by Shakra. He laughed. Without any sense of pride, he laughed and spoke to those trembling ones. "O Madana! O Maruts! O wives of the gods! Do not be scared. Please accept these gifts and do not make this place non-existent." [1015] When the divinity, Nara, spoke in this way, the gods lost their fear. Ashamed, they bowed their heads down and asked him to be compassionate. They said, "O lord! This act on your part is not surprising. You are supreme and unchanging. Large numbers of patient ones who seek bliss bow down before your lotus feet. The gods create many kinds of impediments for those who serve you. Those who are your own transcend those and reach your supreme feet. They [1016] do not wish to give others a share from their share of offerings. However, protected by you, your devotees place their feet on the heads of such impediments. There are some who manage to cross over the ocean of impediments created by us in the form of hunger, thirst, the three seasons of time, [1017] the wind, taste [1018] and the genital organs. [1019] However, they succumb to rage and fail to reach your feet. Having traversed an extremely difficult path of austerities, they throw it away in vain. [1020] This is like drowning in a *goshpada*." [1021] While he was being praised in this way, the lord showed them women who were extraordinary to behold. They were beautifully adorned and were serving

him. The companions of the gods saw those women, who were as beautiful as Shri. Their fragrance bewildered them and their own beauty faded because of their magnificent beauty. They bowed down before him. The lord of the lord of the gods [1022] seemed to laugh. He said, "From among these, choose any one who is appropriate. She will be an ornament in heaven." Uttering "Oum", the bandis of the gods bowed down and accepted this order. Placing Urvashi, the best among apsaras, at the forefront, they returned to heaven. They bowed down before Indra in his assembly. While all the residents of heaven heard, they spoke about Narayana's strength. Shakra was both amazed and terrified.

"""Achyuta assumed his own form of a swan and spoke about *atma yoga*. [1023] He assumed the forms of Datta, [1024] the Kumaras [1025] and our illustrious father, Rishabha. For the welfare of the worlds, Vishnu descended in his portions. As Hayagriva, he is the one who killed Madhu, recovering the shrutis that had been stolen. As a fish, at the time of the deluge, he protected Manu, the earth and all the herbs. As a boar, he slew Diti's son and raised up the earth from inside the water. As a tortoise, at the time of the churning of the ocean for amrita, he supported the mountain on his own back. When the distressed king of the elephants sought refuge with him, he freed it from the crocodile. He saved the ascetic rishis who fell down and prayed to him. [1026] When Shakra entered darkness consequent to killing Vritra, he saved him. The divine women were imprisoned in the house of the asura and were without a protector. As Nrisimha, he killed the Indra among the asuras and granted the virtuous freedom from fear. In battles between the gods and the asuras, for the sake of the gods, he slays the lords of the daityas. In various *manvantara*s, in different portions, he saves the worlds. He became vamana and took the earth away from Bali. Under the pretext of asking for alms, he handed it over to Aditi's sons. As Rama, he was a fire in the lineage of the Bhargavas. He destroyed the Haihaya lineage and rid the earth of kshatriyas twenty-one times. As Sita's consort, he is the victorious one whose deeds cleanse the world of all impurities. He bound the ocean and destroyed the one with ten heads, along with Lanka. To remove the burden of the earth, he will be born in the Yadu lineage and will perform tasks that are extremely

difficult even for the gods. [1027] Through arguments, he [1028] will confuse unworthy ones who will be engaged in performing sacrifices. At the end of kali yuga, he [1029] will slay the shudra kings. The births and deeds of the lord of the universe are like this. O mighty-armed one! There are many others, full of glorious fame, similar to the ones I have described.’”’

Chapter 11(5)

“‘“The king [1030] asked, ‘O supreme among those who know about the atman! There are those who generally do not worship Hari. Their desires are not quenched and they have not conquered their atmans? What destination do they obtain?’

‘“Chamasa said, ‘The four varnas, brahmanas and others, along with the ashramas, were separately born from Purusha’s mouth, arms, thighs and feet, through combinations of the gunas. Their origin is directly the result of Purusha’s powers. If any one of them does not worship, or neglects, the lord, he is dislodged from his state and falls downwards. There are some who are far away from hearing about Hari’s account. There are others who are far away from chanting about Achyuta. Women, shudras and others like that deserve the compassion of people like you. After having received their second birth of initiation, brahmanas, kshatriyas and vaishyas are allowed to approach Hari’s feet. However, they may be confused and may not follow the sacred texts properly. They do not know about karma. They are insolent and foolish, taking false pride in their learning. They are eager to hear sweet words and foolishly, speak sweet words. [1031] Because of rajas, their resolutions are terrible. They are lascivious and their anger is like that of snakes. Insolent, proud and wicked, they laugh at the ones who are loved by Achyuta. They worship women. The benedictions in their homes are only in the form of sexual intercourse and they speak to each other about this. They perform sacrifices without following the injunctions and without distributing food and dakshina. Ignorant of the consequences, they slaughter animals only for their own subsistence. The intelligence of these deceitful

people is blinded by their wealth, powers, noble birth, learning, renunciation, beauty, strength and deeds. The resultant insolence leads them to show disrespect to the lord Hari and to virtuous ones who are loved by him. He is eternally inside embodied beings, like the sky. The desired lord is in their atmans. He is chanted about in the Vedas, but the ignorant ones do not listen to this. Instead, they converse about topics that further their desires. In this world, living beings are always addicted to sexual intercourse, flesh and liquor and no sanction [1032] is required for this. There are prescribed sanctions for intercourse through marriage and flesh and liquor through sacrifices. However, the objective behind these is ultimate renunciation. The sole fruit of wealth is dharma. Through this, jnana, vijnana and serenity result. However, those who are householders use it for the sake of the body and do not see death, which is invincible in its force. It is sanctioned that inhaling liquor is as good as imbibing it. While killing of animals is sanctioned, that is not sanction for violence. In that way, sexual intercourse is for the sake of offspring, not for pleasure. But people do not understand that this is the pure state of one's own dharma. There are wicked people who do not know this. They are obstinate and pride themselves on being virtuous. They cause violence to trusting animals and after death, are devoured by these creatures. They hate lord Hari, who is present in their own atmans, just as he is in the bodies of others. Their addiction is bound to this mortal body and its associations. Therefore, they descend downwards. There are foolish people who may have crossed the threshold of folly, but have not achieved kaivalya. Moving beyond the momentary, they pursue the three objectives, [1033] but also destroy their own atmans. Those who kill their own atmans are not serene. Though they are ignorant, they pride themselves on being learned. Since they cannot accomplish their objectives, they suffer. All their wishes are frustrated by time. Because of the maya fashioned by Vasudeva, they turn away from him. They have to abandon their homes, offspring, well-wishers and prosperity and enter darkness.'

'"The king [1034] asked, 'At different periods of time, under what names is the illustrious one worshipped by men? What are his complexions and forms? What are the rituals? Please tell us that.'

‘“Karabhajana replied, ‘In *krita, treta, dvapara* and kali, Keshava has different complexions and names. There are different rituals for worshipping him. In krita, he is fair and four-armed, with matted hair. His garments are made out of bark and black antelope skin. He has a sacred thread and holds a string of *rudraksha* beads, a staff and a *kamandalu*. [1035] The men are then serene, without enmity. They are impartial and friendly towards everyone. They worship the divinity through austerities, control of the mind and control of the senses. The lord is glorified as Hamsa, Suparna, Vaikuntha, Dharma, Yogeshvara, Amala, Ishvara, Purusha, Avyakta and Paramatman. In treta, his complexion is red. He is four-armed and his girdle has three strands. [1036] His hair is golden and his atman has the signs mentioned in the three Vedas—the wooden ladle, the wooden spoon and other equipment for sacrifices. [1037] Men are then immersed in the divinity Hari, who has all the gods in him. They follow dharma, know about the brahman and worship him through the rituals of the three Vedas. He is glorified by the names Vishnu, Yajna, Prishnigarbha, Sarvadeva, Urukrama, Vrishakapi, Jayanta and Urugaya. In dvapara, the illustrious one is dark blue in complexion. His garments are yellow and he wields his own weapons. He is characterized by signs like shrivatsa and other signs on his body. O king! Mortal men who wish to know about the supreme Purusha worship him through Vedas and tantras, worshipping him like a great king. “I bow down to Vasudeva. I bow down to Samkarshana. I bow down to Pradyumna and Aniruddha. I bow down to the illustrious one. I bow down to the rishi Narayana, the great-souled Purusha, Vishveshara, Vishva, the one who is in all atmans.” O lord of the earth! In dvapara, this is the way they praise the lord of the universe. Now hear about the diverse tantras and rituals of kali. He is dark in complexion, but his lustre is brilliant. Those who are excellent in intelligence generally worship him through sacrifices and collective chanting, worshipping his limbs, his ornaments, his weapons and his associates. “O great Purusha! I worship your lotus feet. You must always be meditated on. You satisfy all wishes and destroy all the humiliations of material existence. You are the refuge of all the tirthas. Shiva and Virinchi bow down and seek refuge with you. You are the protector of all those who prostrate themselves

before you. You destroy the afflictions of your servants. You are the boat for crossing samsara. O great Purusha! I worship your lotus feet. You are devoted to dharma. Because of the words of your father, you have given up the prosperity of the kingdom, which even the gods find difficult to relinquish, and left for the forest. [1038] To accomplish the desires of your beloved, you pursued a deer fashioned out of maya." O king! Hari is the lord who bestows everything beneficial. In this way, as is appropriate to the yuga, men who follow the conduct of that particular yuga worship the illustrious one in different forms. Noble ones who know about qualities and can pick up the true essence, praise kali. During this era, all the objectives can be accomplished only through chanting his name. This is the greatest gain for those who are wandering around in this world. This is the way they will obtain supreme serenity and destroy samsara. O king! Subjects from krita and the others wish to be born in kali. It is indeed in kali that those who are devoted to Narayana will be born. O great king! Some will be born here and there, but a large number will be born in the Dravida region, where the rivers Tamraparni, Kritamala, Payasvini, the immensely sacred Kaveri and the western part [1039] of the Mahanadi flow. O lord of men! Men who drink these waters are generally spotless in heart and are devoted to the illustrious Vasudeva. O king! With all his soul, if a person goes to Mukunda, the refuge, for shelter, all his tasks [1040] can be discarded. He is not a servant of gods, rishis, creatures, men, relatives or ancestors. Nor is he indebted to any of them. Hari, the supreme lord, loves those who abandon all other sentiments and worship his feet. He resides in their hearts. Even if such a devotee commits a perverse act by chance, he destroys all such sins.'"

'Narada said, "Thus, the lord of Mithila heard about the dharma of being devoted to the illustrious one. Delighted, along with his priests, he worshipped the sages who were the sons of Jayanti. After this, while everyone looked on, the Siddhas vanished. The king followed dharma and obtained the supreme destination. O immensely fortunate one! You have heard about the dharma of being devoted to the illustrious one and you should faithfully resort to it. Free of attachment, you will then obtain the supreme end. The world has been filled with the fame of the two of you, husband and wife,

[1041] since the illustrious lord Hari has come to you as a son. You have acted affectionately towards Krishna, treating him like a son. You have seen him, embraced him, conversed with him, slept with him, shared seats with him and eaten with him. Through this, your atmans have been purified. Kings who bore him enmity, Shishupala, Poundra, Shalva and others, thought about him while they slept and were seated. Their minds were fixed on his stride, his glances, his pastimes and other things. Thereby, they attained a state of union with him. What need be said about those whose minds are attached to him? Krishna is the lord who is in all atmans. In vain, do not think of him as a son. Using his maya, the supreme and undecaying one has hidden his potencies and has followed the conduct of a human. He did this to protect the virtuous and to slay the kings, who are asuras, who were a burden to the earth. His fame pervades the worlds and he descended to confer liberation."'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'Hearing this, the immensely fortunate Vasudeva was greatly surprised. He, and the immensely fortunate Devaki, gave up the delusion that was there in their atmans. If a person controls himself and meditates on this sacred history, all his impurities are cleansed in this world and he becomes worthy of realizing the brahman.'

Chapter 11(6)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Along with his sons, Brahma, surrounded by the gods and the Prajapatis, went there. [1042] Surrounded by a large number of bhutas, Bhava, who brings welfare to creatures, also went there. Indra, the Maruts, the illustrious Adityas, the Vasus, the two Ashvins, the Ribhus, Angiras, the Rudras, the Vishvadevas, Sadhyas, other divinities, the gandharvas, the apsaras, the nagas, the Siddhas, the charanas, the guhyakas, the rishis, the ancestors, the vidyadharas and the kinnaras—all of them went to Dvaraka. Through his form, the illustrious one charmed the world of men. His fame spread throughout the worlds and destroyed all impurities from the worlds. They saw the dazzling prosperity and great opulence there. They saw

Krishna, wonderful to behold, and their eyes were not satisfied. They covered the supreme one among the Yadus with garlands of flowers from celestial gardens. They praised the lord of the universe in colourful words that were deep with meaning.

'The gods said, "O protector! With our intelligence, senses, prana, mind and speech, we prostrate ourselves at your lotus feet. [1043] Those who wish to be liberated from the great bondage of karma are filled with devotion towards you and meditate on you in their hearts. Because of your maya, consisting of the three gunas, you are impossible to conceive. Resorting to those gunas, you create, preserve and destroy all that is manifest. O unvanquished one! However, you are not affected by any of these acts. You are unimpeded and completely absorbed in your own bliss. You are beyond reproach. O one who should be praised! Men who are contaminated by desires cannot be purified only through worship, knowledge, studying, donations, austerities and rituals, unlike those whose atmans are based in sattva. O supreme one! It can only happen through increasing faith and devotion, resulting from listening to your glories. The hearts of sages melt towards you and for their benefit, they bear in their hearts your lotus feet. Like a consuming fire, let those feet burn down everything inauspicious in us. For the sake of an opulence like yours, those who are in control of their atmans and are devoted to you worship the manifestations [1044] which take them beyond the world of heaven, thrice a day. [1045] O lord! Those who follow the rituals of the three Vedas and nirukta, take oblations in their cupped hands and when they offer oblations into the sacrificial fire, think about your feet. There are devotees who are superior to these. They are yogis who engage in *adhyatma yoga* and wish to know about the illustrious one's maya. For their supreme benefit, they too meditate on your feet. O lord! You cheerfully accept all the offerings that are properly rendered to you, even this garland of faded wild flowers, which the illustrious Shri rivals, like a co-wife. May your feet be a fire that destroys all the impure wishes in our hearts. Your feet caused fear in the army of the asuras and granted the army of the gods freedom from fear. The valour in your three strides was like a flagpole, from which, like banners, was strung the one with the three streams. [1046] O pow-

erful one! This ensured heaven for the virtuous and drove the deceitful away from there. O illustrious one! We worship your feet. May they cleanse us of our sins. Like cattle tethered through the nose, Brahma and the others, and those with bodies, are under your subjugation, in your form as time. They struggle against each other. You are beyond Purusha and Prakriti. O Purushottama! May your feet spread benefit among us. You are the cause behind creation, preservation and destruction of the unmanifest, the jivatman and even Mahat. You are spoken of as time, with three naves. [1047] As time, your movements are imperceptible, but you are engaged in diminishing everything. You are the supreme being. It is from you that Purusha obtains the seed of creation, invincible in its energy, and impregnates, like an embryo, the principle of Mahat. Thus joined, from within itself, it creates this golden cosmic egg, with the external sheaths that cover it. You are the lord of everything mobile and immobile. You are the lord of the senses. [1048] The objects of the senses arose from the transformation of the gunas, which are the result of your maya. However, even though you enjoy the objects of the senses, you are never attached to them. Others may themselves renounce the objects of the senses, but are scared of them. You have sixteen thousand wives. They exhibit their smiling glances and alluring feelings by arching their eyebrows. They send impudent messages of engaging in intercourse, using Ananga's arrows. However, they have not been able to agitate your senses even for an instant. There are streams of amrita in the form of your accounts and there are also rivers that have flowed after washing your feet. Both can destroy all the impurities of the worlds. Those who desire purification for themselves approach either of these two tirthas—hearing your accounts from the sacred texts, or bathing their limbs in waters that have flowed from your feet."'

Badarayana's son said, 'Along with the gods and Isha, the performer of one hundred sacrifices [1049] praised Hari. Stationed in the sky, he bowed down and addressed Govinda in these words.

'Brahma said, "O lord! Earlier, you were requested by us to relieve the earth of her burden. O one who exists in the atmans of everything! All that we asked for has been accomplished. You have established dharma among

virtuous ones who are devoted to the truth. Your fame has been spread in all the directions and it destroys all the impurities of the world. Descending in the lineage of the Yadus, you have manifested your supreme form. For the welfare of the world, you have performed wonderfully powerful deeds. O lord! During kali yuga, virtuous people who hear about your conduct and chant it will easily cross over the darkness. O Purushottama! O lord! Since you descended in the lineage of the Yadus, one hundred and twenty-five autumns have passed. O one who holds up everything! So far as the task of the gods is concerned, nothing remains now. Because of the curse of the brahmanas, it is as if your lineage has already been destroyed. Therefore, if you so desire, please enter your supreme abode again. O Vaikuntha! We are your servants. Save us, the guardians of the worlds, and their worlds."

'The illustrious one replied, "O lord of the gods! I have understood what you have said. All your tasks have been accomplished and the earth's burden has been reduced. Through their valour, courage and prosperity, this lineage of the Yadus wished to devour the world. But I have checked it, just as the shoreline holds back the great ocean. If I leave without destroying this insolent lineage of the Yadus, the world will be destroyed by their surging flow. Because of the curse of the brahmanas, the destruction of the lineage has now started. O Brahma! O unblemished one! When it is over, I will visit you in your residence."' [1050]

Shri-Shuka continued, 'Thus addressed by the protector of the worlds, Svayambhu bowed down before him. Along with the large number of gods, the divinity returned to his own abode. After this, terrible portents arose in Dvaravati. Witnessing these, the illustrious one spoke to all the assembled elders among the Yadus. The illustrious one said, "These terrible portents have arisen all around us. This is because of the curse imposed on our lineage by the brahmanas and it is impossible to counter it. O revered ones! If we wish to live, we should no longer reside here. Prabhasa is an extremely sacred place. Without any delay, let us go there today. Because of Daksha's curse, the lord of the stars was seized by consumption. [1051] After bathing there, he was instantly cleansed of the sin and resumed waxing again. Let us also bathe there and satisfy the gods and the ancestors. Let us feed the

revered brahmanas with food that possesses all the qualities. They are worthy recipients and with a great deal of respect, let us give them gifts. Using these donations like boats, we will easily cross over this ocean of hardships." O descendant of the Kuru lineage! The illustrious one instructed the Yadavas in this way. Making up their minds to go to that tirtha, they started to yoke their chariots.

'O king! Uddhava saw this and heard what the illustrious one had said. He was always devoted to Krishna and he too saw the terrible portents. He approached the lord of all the lords of the worlds in private. He bowed his head down at his feet. Joining his hands in salutation, he spoke to him. Uddhava said, "O god! O lord of the gods! O lord of yoga! Hearing and chanting about you is sacred. O lord! You are capable and you could have countered the curse of the brahmanas. But you have decided to destroy the lineage and give up the world. O Keshava! O protector! Even for half a kshana, I cannot tolerate being separated from your lotus feet. Also take me to your own abode. O Krishna! Your pastimes are extremely auspicious for men and are like nectar to the ears. As soon as they hear it, people give up all other desires. Whether we are lying down, seated, standing, bathing, playing or eating, we are always devoted to you. We love you like our own selves. How can you abandon us? By being servants to you, we are capable of defeating your maya—eating the remnants of your food and ornamenting ourselves with garlands, fragrances, garments and ornaments that you have already enjoyed. There are rishis who use the wind as a garment. They are mendicants and hold up their seed. They are serene and unblemished *sannyasi*s. They go to your abode, known as the brahman. O great yogi! But we wander around in this world, following the path of karma. By conversing about you with those who are devoted to you, we will cross over this insurmountable darkness. We will remember you and chant about what you have done and said, your strides, your generous smiles, your glances and your playful pastimes. You followed the conduct of the human world and did all this." O king! Devaki's illustrious son was addressed in this way. In that extremely private place, he spoke to his beloved servant, Uddhava.'

Chapter 11(7)

‘The illustrious one said, “O immensely fortunate one! You have correctly described what I wish to do. Brahma, Bhava and the guardians of the worlds desire that I should return to my own abode. In this world, I have completely accomplished the task of the gods. Requested by Brahma, that is the reason why I descended, along with my portion. [1052] The lineage has already been burnt by the curse and will be destroyed by fighting with each other. On the seventh day, the ocean will overflow and submerge this city. As soon as I abandon this world, it will certainly lose everything that is auspicious in it. O virtuous one! It will soon be overtaken by kali. When I leave, you should no longer reside on earth. You are without sin. However, in kali yuga, people will be full of sin. Therefore, give up all attachment towards your own relatives and friends. You must completely immerse your mind in me and, impartial in vision, wander around the earth. Everything that is perceived through the mind, words, eyes, ears and other senses is perishable. Know that these are thought because of maya. A person who is separated from the truth roams around, pursuing many objectives and suffering from good and bad consequences. Because of a sense of differentiation in his intelligence, he thinks of good and bad karma, akarma and vikarma. [1053] Therefore, control the aggregate of the senses. Control your mind and visualize this universe within your own atman. See your atman spread out within me, the lord. With jnana and vijnana, realize that your atman is one with all embodied beings. You will realize the atman and be content in the atman. There will be no impediments in your progress. A person who is beyond perceptions of good and bad is like a child. He does not refrain from what is prohibited because it is prohibited, or because he uses his intelligence to judge what is good or bad. He is serene and friendly towards all beings. Fixed in jnana and vijnana, he sees that the universe is pervaded by my atman and does not face hardships again.”’ [1054]

Shri Shuka continued, ‘O king! The great devotee of the illustrious one was thus instructed by the illustrious one. Uddhava was eager to know the

truth. He prostrated himself before Achyuta and said the following.

'Uddhava said, "O lord of yoga! O one who spreads yoga! O one whose atman is yoga! O one from whom yoga results! For my benefit, you have said that renunciation is the sign of sannyasa. O lord! Renunciation is extremely difficult for those who desire objects of pleasure for themselves. O one whose atman is in everything. This is especially true of those who are not devoted to you. That is my view. O illustrious one! Because of foolish intelligence, I am immersed in notions of 'I' and 'mine'. Your maya has created this bondage for me. Therefore, instruct your servant, so that I can easily follow those instructions. You are the self-illuminating atman. You are the truth. O lord! Barring you, I do not see anyone, even among the gods, who can do this. The minds of Brahma and all the others with bodies are confounded by your maya and conceive the external as the truth. You are perfect. You are without limits. You are the omniscient lord. You are without agitation. You are the one who resides in Vaikuntha. Though my mind has renounced, I am tormented by material hardships. O Narayana! O Nara's friend! I seek refuge with you."

'The illustrious one continued, "There are men in this world who are often accomplished in discerning the truth about the world. Using their own intelligence, they raise their atmans above inauspicious desires. Especially for humans, the atman is one's preceptor. Through direct perception and inference, a person can realize what is best for himself. There are patient people who are accomplished in samkhya and yoga. With this, they can directly see me, along with all my potencies. Many kinds of bodies have been created—with one foot, with two feet, with four feet, with many feet, or with no feet. Among all these, humans are dear to me. In this form, they can search for me, the lord, through signs. I cannot be perceived through the qualities, [1055] but can be inferred through the signs. [1056] In this connection, an ancient history is recounted. This is a conversation between the infinitely energetic Yadu and an avadhuta. There was a young and wise brahmana who was an avadhuta. On seeing him wander around, without any fear, Yadu, who knew about dharma, questioned him.

‘“Yadu asked, ‘O brahmana! Though you do not do anything, how did you come to possess this greatly developed intelligence? Having acquired this knowledge, you are roaming around in this world, like a child. In general, men pursue dharma, artha and kama and for this purpose, try to obtain lifespan, fame and prosperity. You are capable, wise and accomplished. You are extremely handsome and your speech is like amrita. However, you do not desire to do anything. You are like a dumb or crazy person, like a pishacha. People are scorched in the fire of desire and avarice. However, you are not burnt by that fire. You are free, like an elephant stadning in the waters of the Ganga. [1057] O brahmana! What is the reason for your finding bliss in your own atman? We are asking you. Please tell us. How are you devoid of touch and the other senses? You are alone in your atman.’”

‘The illustrious one continued, “The immensely fortunate Yadu asked the immensely intelligent brahmana. Asked respectfully, the brahmana spoke to the one who was bent down in humility.

‘“The brahmana replied, [1058]‘O king! Using my intelligence, I have had many preceptors. Having obtained my intelligence from them, I have become free and roam around this world. Listen. O king! I have accepted twenty-four as my preceptors—the earth, the air, space, water, fire, the moon, the sun, the pigeon, the python, the ocean, the moth, the bee, the elephant, the gatherer of honey, the deer, the fish, Pingala, the osprey, the child, the maiden, the maker of arrows, the snake, the spider and the wasp. My knowledge and conduct are derived from whatever I have learnt from them. O Yayati’s son! O tiger among men! I will tell you exactly what I have learnt from each of them. Listen to what I have to say. Even if a person is attacked by creatures, he must be patient and realize that they are under the control of destiny. Having grasped this, a person must not deviate from his path. I have learnt this conduct from the earth. Everything in this world must be for the sake of others. The benefit of others is the reason for one’s birth. As a student of the mountain and as a student of the tree, [1059] a virtuous person learns about living for others. A sage must be satisfied with whatever is necessary for physical subsistence and must not seek gratification of the senses. [1060] Knowledge must not be destroyed. Nor must speech

and the mind be agitated. A yogi comes into contact with objects that possess many kinds of characteristics. However, like the air, his atman must not be attached to the good or the bad. In this world, one enters a body that is made out of the elements and thereby assumes their attributes. But just as the air bears scents, but is not attached to them, a yogi who has realized the atman must not be attached to these attributes. Space is present within all mobile and immobile objects. But though it pervades, it is unlimited and unattached. A sage must meditate and behave like the pervasive sky. Despite association, he must be unattached, with his atman immersed in the brahman. Space is not touched by clouds and other things that are borne along by the wind. In that way, like space, a man must not be touched by fire, water and food and other qualities that are created by time. Water is naturally pure, gentle and sweet. At tirthas, its purifying qualities are chanted about. In that way, a sage must be friendly towards men and must purify them. Like the fire, a person who is united with his atman blazes because of his austerities. He is unshakeable and uses his stomach as a vessel. [1061]

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'The brahmana continued, "O king! Embodied beings can experience happiness of the senses in heaven or hell too. Therefore, a learned person must desire to avoid unhappiness. Like the python, a person should not make any efforts, but should eat whatever turns up on its own. This is regardless of whether the food is tasty or tasteless, large in quantity or small. Like the giant serpent, he must be content with whatever fortune brings to him. Even if there is no food, he must not make any efforts and must fast. Even if it is for many days, he must lie down. Even if he possesses energy, physical strength and mental strength, he must not make efforts to maintain the body. He must lie down, without any sleep. Even if he possesses his senses, he must not make efforts. A sage must be as tranquil and deep as the ocean, fathomless and impossible to cross. He possesses no limits. He is as calm as the water and cannot be agitated. Depending on what rivers do, an

ocean does not overflow or dry up. Like that, a sage who is devoted to Narayana is not affected by the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of his wishes. A woman has been fashioned by the god's maya. On seeing her, a person who has not conquered his senses is tempted by her seductive behaviour. Like a moth headed towards a fire, he descends into blinding darkness. A foolish person's mind is allured by a woman's golden ornaments and garments and other objects fashioned out of maya. His mind is tempted by the desire to gratify the senses. With his vision destroyed, he is destroyed like a moth. A sage must follow the conduct of a bee and with each morsel, only eat a little, just enough to maintain the body. Without causing trouble, he must not tarry at any household for long. [1062] The bee collects the essence from flowers everywhere, big or small. Like that, an accomplished man gathers from all texts, great or small. "This is what I will eat when evening is over. This is what I will eat tomorrow." What has been begged must not be collected in this fashion. The hand is the vessel and the stomach is the container. One must not collect, as the bee does. A mendicant must not collect for eating at night or the next day. If a person collects the way a bee does, he and his collection are destroyed. Even with a foot, a mendicant must not touch a young woman, not even an image made out of wood. Otherwise, like a male elephant that wishes to touch the limbs of a female elephant, he will be bound. A wise person must never approach a woman. She is like his death. A male elephant which does this is killed by a stronger male elephant. An avaricious person accumulates after making efforts. He does not give it away, nor enjoy it. The wealth is stolen and enjoyed by others, just as the gatherer of honey steals honey from a honeycomb. Those who desire the life of a householder aspire to acquire riches after a great deal of effort. However, like the honey gatherer, the mendicant enjoys this before the householder. A mendicant who roams around in the forest must never listen to songs about carnal pleasures. He must learn from the deer. Captivated by the hunter's singing, it was captured. Addicted to the dancing, musical instruments and singing of vulgar women, Rishyashringa, the son of a deer, came under their subjugation and became like a puppet. If a person is bewitched by taste, the tongue becomes extremely powerful for him. His intelligence becomes

wicked and he faces a futile death, like a fish through a hook. Through fasting, learned people quickly bring their senses under control, with the exception of the tongue. When one is without food, its power increases. Until this sense has been conquered, it cannot be said that a man has conquered his senses. The tongue must be defeated. When taste has been conquered, everything has been conquered.

'"In ancient times, in the city of Videha, there used to be a courtesan named Pingala. O son of a king! Listen to what I learnt from her. Once, that svairini sought to entice a beloved into her house. At the right time, she stood outside her door, displaying her supreme beauty. O bull among men! She was greedy for money. She looked at the men who were passing along the road, considering who would pay her price. She wanted a wealthy lover. Prostitution was her means of subsistence and men came and went. She kept thinking, 'Perhaps another wealthy person will approach me and give me a lot of money.' As she waited at the door in this vain hope, she lost her sleep. Sometimes, she went out into the street. Sometimes, she again entered her house. In this way, midnight arrived. In her wish for money, her mouth dried up and her mind was distressed. As a result of her thoughts, a great sense of detachment arose in her and it brought happiness. Non-attachment is like a sword in a man's hand. It severs the bonds of desire. Her mind was full of non-attachment, and hear her song from me. O king! A person in whom non-attachment has not been generated is unable to cast aside the bonds of the body. This is just like a man without vijnana being unable to give up the notion of 'mine'.

'"Pingala said, 'Alas! Behold my pervasive delusion. I have not been able to conquer my atman. Like a foolish person, I desire pleasure, even from a worthless lover. The most beloved person, the one who can give me pleasure, is near me. He will always give me riches, but I have forsaken him. Like an ignorant person, I am serving an inferior person who cannot satisfy my desires. This gives rise to misery, fear, mental distress, grief and delusion. I have tormented my atman in vain. My occupation has been that of a courtesan. It is a censured vocation. Hankering after riches, I sell myself to pitiable men who seek women. Thereby, I hope to obtain pleasure

and riches for myself. Who but me would crave for this house made out of nine gates? [1063] It is fashioned out of bones, the spine, the ribs, the bones of the hands and the feet, body hair and nails, and is covered with skin. It is full of urine and excrement that oozes out. In this city of Videha, I am the only person who is foolish in intelligence. I did not desire Achyuta, who gives his own atman to others. Instead, like a wicked person, I wished for others. He is the most beloved well-wisher. He is the protector. He is the atman in all embodied creatures. I will sell myself to him and like Rama, find pleasure with him. What pleasure can men provide to wives who desire pleasure? They have a beginning and an end and time separates them from their wives. This is also true of gods. I must have done some karma that makes the illustrious Vishnu favour me. I have hankered after evil desires. However, this non-attachment, the bringer of pleasure, has been generated in me. For someone as unfortunate as me, the hardship has become a cause of non-attachment. A man who desires serenity can destroy all bondage through this. I will bow my head down and accept this favour, giving up all carnal pleasure and wicked desires. I will seek shelter in the lord. I am faithful and devoted. I will survive on whatever comes to me. I will enjoy myself and find pleasure in the atman. If a person falls down into the well of samsara, his vision is destroyed by material objects. His atman is devoured by a serpent in the form of time. Apart from the supreme lord, who can save such a person? When a person is not distracted, he can see that this entire universe is being devoured by a serpent in the form of time. He realizes that his atman is his own protector and he becomes detached towards everything that is material.'"

'The brahmana said, "Having made up her mind in this way, she gave up and severed all the wicked desires for lovers. Resorting to serenity, she sat down on her bed. Hope is the greatest misery. Lack of hope is the greatest happiness. Therefore, severing all desire for lovers, Pingala slept well, in happiness."'

Chapter 11(9)

‘The brahmana said, “Whatever men love to possess is the cause of their misery. A learned person who possesses nothing obtains infinite happiness. Powerful ospreys who did not have any flesh attacked an osprey that had some flesh. When it gave up that piece of meat, it obtained happiness. I have no sense of honour or dishonour. I do not have to think about my home or children. I sport with my own atman and find pleasure in my own atman. Like a child, I thus roam around this world. There are two kinds of people who are free from anxiety and are flooded with supreme bliss. There is the dumb and ignorant child and there is the person who has gone beyond the gunas. Once, a maiden had to herself receive guests who had come to her house to choose her, [1064] her relatives having gone elsewhere. She welcomed them hospitably. O king! In private, she was pounding some paddy so that she could serve them food. However, the conch shell bangles on her hands rubbed against each other and made a sound while she was pounding. She was greatly ashamed at this and embarrassed because of what they would think. [1065] One by one, she broke all the bangles, so that only two remained on each hand. However, as she pounded, these still rubbed against each other and created a sound. Therefore, she broke one from each pair so that the other one would not create a sound. O scorcher of enemies! I wandered around the world, wishing to know the truth about the world. That is how I witnessed the lesson I learnt from the maiden. When many people reside together, there are quarrels. When there are two, there is conversation. Therefore, one must reside alone, like the maiden’s bangle. Having perfected the *asana*, [1066] one must control the breath and fix the mind. Non-attachment must be cultivated through the practice of yoga. The mind must be attentively steadied. When the mind is permanently fixed on him, the particles of karma are gradually shed off. As sattva increases, rajas and tamas are destroyed. Like a fire extinguished without kindling, one achieves *nirvana*. One’s mind is then completely immersed in one’s atman. One is no longer conscious of anything, inside or outside. This is like a maker of arrows who was so absorbed in the making of his arrow that he did not notice the king passing by his side. A person must move around alone, without a

fixed residence. He must not be distracted and must seek out caves. [1067] The sage's activities must be such that he is not noticed. He must be alone and must speak little. When a person attempts to construct a house, this is futile and leads to misery, since his existence is itself temporary. A snake enters a house that has been built by someone else and enjoys happiness. Narayana is the only divinity. Earlier, he used his own maya to create. At the end of the kalpa, using his portion known as time, he withdraws. [1068] He is the lord of the universe. He is absolute and without a second. He is the support of his atman and supports everything. Everything seeks refuge in him. Using his powers in the form of time, he brings his powers, sattva and the others, into a state of equilibrium and remains as the original being. He is the lord of Purusha and Pradhana. For both superior and inferior beings, he is the supreme. He has been described as kaivalya. He is the aggregate of pure consciousness and bliss, and there is nothing else that can designate him. His atman is pure consciousness. O scorcher of enemies! At the time of the original creation, he used his own maya to agitate the three gunas and create the thread. [1069] This thread is spoken of as the manifestation of the three gunas and creates the universe, which faces in all the directions. This universe is woven into that thread, through which, humans undergo samsara. From inside its heart, the spider expands its web through its mouth, plays for a while and then swallows it up again. The great lord behaves like that. If an embodied being fixes his mind and intelligence completely in something, out of love, hatred or fear, that will certainly be the form he obtains. O king! An insect is forced by a wasp to enter its nest and once there, it thinks about the wasp and assumes its form, without giving up its former form. O lord! My intelligence has learnt from these preceptors. Now hear about what my intelligence has learnt from my own body. I will tell you. Since it has caused non-attachment and discrimination, my body is my preceptor. Since it is subject to creation, preservation and destruction, it is a constant source of hardships. Nevertheless, I have used it to contemplate the truth. Having determined that it belongs to others, [1070] I roam around without being attached to it. It is with a desire to nourish and develop this beloved body that a person goes through great hardships to get a wife, offspring, riches, ani-

mals, servants, houses and relatives and accumulate wealth. However, at the end, it is destroyed, just as a tree follows its dharma and perishes, leaving a seed behind. The tongue drags such a person in one direction, thirst in another. The genitals drag in one direction, the stomach or the ears somewhere else. The sense of smell drags in one direction, the fickle eyes in another. The organs of action head elsewhere. These are like many co-wives who tug at the master of the household. In ancient times, using his own potencies, the one without origin created many species—trees, reptiles, animals, birds, gnats and fish. However, his heart was not satisfied with this and he fashioned humans. The divinity was delighted, because they possessed the intelligence to realize the brahman. Though it is not permanent, this birth as a human is extremely difficult to obtain and comes after many births. Before he dies, a persevering person must immediately make efforts to prevent his downfall. Indeed, the objects of the senses can be enjoyed as any kind of species. In this way, non-attachment was generated and I obtained insight about vijnana. Devoid of attachment, I roam around in this world and have no sense of ahamkara. Jnana obtained from a single preceptor is not stable and may not even be complete. Though the brahman is without a second, rishis have chanted about it in many ways."

'The illustrious one concluded, "The brahmana, profound in his intelligence, spoke to Yadu in this way and sought his leave. The king honoured and worshipped him. Happy, he went to wherever he had come from. Hearing the words of the avadhuta, the forefather of our ancestors freed himself of all his attachments and his mind became impartial towards everything."'

Chapter 11(10)

'The illustrious one said, "A person must seek refuge with me and carefully follow his own dharma, as instructed by me. Without harbouring any desire, he must observe the conduct appropriate to his varna, ashrama and lineage. With his atman purified, he must think about the truth and see that embodied beings are attached to material objects. Since these are based on

the gunas, all efforts will lead to calamities. While asleep, one sees material objects, thinking and wishing for them, but this is futile. Similarly, because of the gunas, the intelligence thinks of the atman as many and differentiated. Immersed in me, a person must give up acts of pravritti and engage in acts of nivritti. A person must be engaged in inquiring and must not accept acts simply because they have been sanctioned. Having immersed himself in me, a person must always accept the norms of yama and, occasionally, the norms of niyama. [1071] He must be free from pride and envy. He must be accomplished, without a sense of ownership and firm in his friendship. He must not be hasty and must seek to know the truth. He must not be jealous and must not waste his words in unnecessary talk. He must be indifferent towards a wife, offspring, a house, fields, relatives, property and other things. He must be impartial and realize that all these are for the purposes of the atman. The gross is distinct from the subtle. Similarly, he must look at his own atman and know it as distinct from the body. The fire is different from the kindling that is burnt. The fire that burns is different from the one that illuminates. Depending on the qualities of what it has entered, the fire assumes those qualities—dormant, blazing, large, small. That is the way with the atman and the attributes of the body.

"'This body is fashioned out of Purusha's gunas and is bound to this samsara. It is only through knowledge that a being can separate these from the atman. Therefore, through inquiry, one must approach the pure and the supreme that is within oneself. Gradually, one must give up the perception that material objects are real. The preceptor is like the lower piece of kindling that is the support and the disciple is the upper piece of kindling. Instruction is the friction between the two and knowledge is the resulting fire that brings happiness. The pure intelligence of a disciple is refined through the intelligence of an accomplished preceptor and drives away the maya that results from the gunas. The gunas are eventually burnt and so is the intelligence itself, just as the fire is pacified when there is no kindling left. O dear one! You may think there are many agents who perform karma and many who enjoy the consequent happiness and unhappiness; you may think that all the material objects in the world are eternal, as some sacred texts

say, regardless of the progress of time; you may think that all the material objects have an original existence, the intelligence perceiving them as different depending on their origin, transformations and forms; you may think that all embodied beings constantly adopt different forms, depending on their births, states and other things, but even then, the agents of karma are not noticed to be independent. [1072] What is the value of the enjoyment of joy or misery by someone who is under someone else's control? It is seen that even learned embodied beings do not enjoy even a little bit of happiness. Nor do foolish people experience unhappiness. Therefore, ahamkara is pointless. Even if people know how to achieve happiness and how to remove unhappiness, they do not know the yoga that will directly enable them to avoid the power of death. When death is at hand, what material object of desire provides happiness? When one is conveyed to a place of execution so as to be killed, this does not satisfy. We have already seen that the happiness we have heard about is contaminated by rivalry, envy, decay and death. There are many impediments in pursuing objects of desire. Like agriculture, it ofen fails. Even if the recommended dharma [1073] is properly performed, without any impediments, a person earns certain positions and goes to them. Hear about these. In this world, when gods are worshipped through sacrifices, the performer of the sacrifice goes to the world of heaven. He has earned this divine state for himself and, like a god, enjoys himself there. Because of his own accumulated good deeds, he is astride a vimana and is praised by gandharvas. He wears enchanting garments and is amidst celestial women. The vimana is adorned with bells, nets and garlands and can go anywhere it wills. Along with the women, he amuses himself in divine pleasures. He is content and does not know that he will fall down. He enjoys himself in heaven until his store of good deeds is exhausted. When the store of good deeds is exhausted, driven by time, he is made to unwillingly fall down. There may be a person who is addicted to adharma because of his association with wicked people or because he has not conquered his senses; he is addicted to desire, miserly and avaricious; he craves for women and causes injury to beings; he kills animals without following the injunctions; he offers sacrifices to large numbers of pretas and bhutas; such a person is

helpless and goes to many hells, where he is submerged in terrible darkness. Having assumed a body, he again undertakes karma that leads to hardships in the future. Therefore, he has to assume another body there. What happiness can there be for a person who follows the dharma of mortals? The worlds and the guardians of the worlds live for a kalpa and are scared of me. Brahma, whose lifespan is for two *parardha*s, [1074] is also scared of me. The gunas create karma and the gunas create the senses. The jivatman is united with the gunas and enjoys the fruits of karma. As long as disequilibrium between the gunas exists, until then, there will be differentiated perception of the atman. As long as differentiated perception of the atman exists, until then, there will be dependence on something else. As long as dependence on something else exists, until then, there will be fear from the lord. Therefore, those who resort to the gunas and are absorbed in them are confounded and lament. When there is imbalance in the gunas, I am addressed by different names—time, atman, agama, the world, nature, dharma and so on."

'Uddhava asked, "O lord! In the body, the jivatman is born with the gunas and exists amidst them. How can it not be covered and bound by the gunas? Alternatively, how can it be bound by them? What are the signs of it existing, amusing itself, enjoying itself, letting go, lying down, being seated, or leaving? O Achyuta! O supreme among those who can answer questions! Tell me this. How can it always be bound? How can it always be free? This is the doubt that I have."'

Chapter 11(11)

'The illustrious one said, "I am bound" or "I am free", such descriptions are for the gunas, not in reality. The gunas have their roots in maya. For me, there is no bondage or liberation. Grief, confusion, happiness, unhappiness and the state of the body result from maya. What one sees in a dream is not spoken of as real. It is the same with samsara. O Uddhava! Among embodied creatures, knowledge and ignorance have existed since the beginning

and have been fashioned by my maya, leading to bondage or liberation. O immensely intelligent one! The jivatman is part of my portion, but is bound because of ignorance. The state of liberation occurs through knowledge. I will speak to you about the contrary signs of bondage and liberation. O son! [1075] Though existing in the same body, these are opposite kinds of tendencies. These are like two birds which are similar and are friends. [1076] By chance, they have made their nest on the same tree. One of them eats the fruits of the *pippala* tree. The other one does not eat, but is stronger. The one who does not eat the fruits of the pippala tree has knowledge and knows himself, as well as the other one. However, this is not true of the one who eats the fruits of the pippala tree. He is full of ignorance and is always bound. The one who possesses knowledge is always free. Like a person waking up from sleep, the learned person knows that he is in a body, but is not the body. However, like seeing something in a dream, an evil-minded person is in the body and does not know that he is not the body. A learned person accepts the senses and the objects of the senses, knowing that these attributes are products of the gunas. He is not attached to an act as an agent. However, an ignorant person exists in this body and, driven by destiny, performs acts through the senses, which are the products of the gunas. He takes himself to be the agent and is bound. Thus, in acts of lying down, sitting, walking, bathing, seeing, touching, inhaling, eating, hearing and other things, the learned person is not bound. He knows that these are experienced by the gunas. Though he exists in the material body, he is not touched, just as the sky, the sun or the wind are not attached. His vision is accomplished and sharpened through non-attachment and his doubts are dispelled. Like a person who has woken up from sleep, he turns away from these things. When a person's breath of life, senses, mind, intelligence and conduct are devoid of desire, even though he is in a body, he is not bound by the gunas. A learned person is not affected when he is injured through violence, nor if he is worshipped by chance. He does not praise or criticize, regardless of what is done or said, good or bad. Delinked from good and evil, a sage is impartial in his outlook. He does not speak anything, or think about doing anything, good or bad. He takes pleasure in his own atman.

With this kind of conduct, a sage roams around, like a dumb person. If a person is accomplished in the sacred texts about the brahman, but he is not immersed in the supreme, all his efforts bear no fruit. These are like the efforts of a person who tends to a cow that yields no milk. O dear one! If a person maintains a cow that has already been milked [1077] or maintains an unchaste wife, if his body is under someone else's control, if his offspring are wicked, if his wealth is not used for worthy purposes, or if his words are not used to speak about me, he is a person who moves from one misery to another misery. O dear one! Words that speak about my deeds of creation, preservation and destruction, my avataras, births and pastimes, are those that purify the worlds. Words that do not speak about these are barren and the intelligent do not accept them. Having thus inquired, one must give up the error about the atman being many. The mind must be immersed in the all-pervasive me and everything else must be given up. If you are incapable of fixing your mind in the brahman in an unwavering fashion, render all acts to me and undertake them with indifference. [1078] O Uddhava! Listen faithfully to extremely auspicious narrations about me. They purify the worlds. Repeatedly chant, remember and enact my birth and deeds. Seeking refuge in me, undertake dharma, artha and kama for my sake. In this way, you will obtain unwavering devotion in me, the eternal one. A person who associates with virtuous people develops devotion towards me and worships me. Hence, he easily obtains my abode, seen by virtuous people."

'Uddhava asked, "O Uttamashloka! O lord! In your view, what kind of a person is virtuous? What kind of devotion towards you is approved of by virtuous people? O controller and supreme being! O controller of the worlds! O lord of the universe! I am bowing down before you. I am devoted to you. I am seeking shelter in you. Please tell me this. You are the brahman. You are the paramatman. You are detached like the sky. You are the supreme being. You are superior to Prakriti. O illustrious one! It is because of your own wishes that you assume different kinds of forms and descend."

'The illustrious one replied, "A sage is compassionate and does not injure others. He is forgiving towards all creatures. He bases himself only on the truth and his atman is without blemish. He is impartial and always tries to

help others. His mind is not affected by desire. He is mild and controlled. He is pure and possesses nothing. He is not attached to this world. He eats moderately and is serene and steady. He seeks refuge in me. He is not distracted. His intelligence is deep. He is determined and has conquered the six attributes. [1079] He is not proud, but honours others. He is willing to teach and friendly. He is merciful and wise. He knows his own dharma and what I have instructed about good and bad. However, he ignores them and worships me. [1080] Such a person is supreme. Those who worship me may or may not know my nature. However, because they single-mindedly worship me, they are regarded as the supreme among devotees. O Uddhava! Seeing, touching and worshipping my signs and people who are devoted to me; serving, praising and chanting about my qualities and deeds; devotion towards hearing about my account and meditating on me; rendering everything that has been obtained and their own selves to me; immersing themselves in accounts of my deeds and taking delight in my festivals; singing, dancing, playing musical instruments and engaging in collective festivities in my temples; going on pilgrimages and rendering me the sanctioned offerings at the time of all the annual festivals; getting initiated into methods of worshipping me through the Vedas and the tantras and observing my vows; singly, and with others, making efforts to erect my images; constructing gardens, groves, pleasure grounds, cities and temples; like a servant, rendering service at my temples without any duplicity, through sweeping, smearing, sprinking and ornamenting; being without pride, insolence and self-praise; not using anything that is offered to me, not even the light of a lamp; rendering everything that is loved in this world, including what is most dear, to me—these are the things that make one qualified for the infinite. O fortunate one! The sun, the fire, brahmanas, cattle, Vaishnavas, the sky, the wind, the water, the earth, the atman and all creatures—these are places where I am worshipped. I am worshipped in the sun with hymns from the three Vedas. I am worshipped in the fire through the oblations that are offered. O dear one! In the best of brahmanas, I am worshipped through hospitality. I am worshipped in cattle with grass and other things. Through fraternal affection, I am worshipped in Vaishnavas. In the heart and in the sky,

I am worshipped through faithful meditation. I am worshipped in the best of the wind through intelligence. [1081] I am worshipped in the water through various objects [1082] mixed with water. I am worshipped in the earth with various mantras. I am worshipped in one's own atman with objects of pleasure. I am worshipped in all creatures as the atman that is in their hearts. I am the kshetrajna who is there in all creatures. Those who worship me are impartial and see me everywhere. In these places of worship, one must control oneself and serenely meditate and worship me in my four-armed form, with a conch shell, chakra, mace and lotus. If a person controls himself and worships me through sacrifices and civic works, he develops devotion towards me. Through serving virtuous people, remembrance about me is generated. O Uddhava! In general, there is no means other than *bhakti yoga* and association with the virtuous. This is generally the best, because I support the virtuous."'

Chapter 11(12)

'The illustrious one said, "The control of yoga, samkhya, dharma, studying, austerities, renunciation, sacrifices, civic works, donations, vows, worshipping through mantras, tirthas, niyama and yama cannot capture me as easily as does association with the virtuous. That destroys all attachment. From one yuga to another yuga, many creatures have obtained me through association with the virtuous—daityas, yatudhanas, animals, birds, gandharvas, apsaras, nagas, Siddhas, charanas, guhyakas, vidyadharas, humans, vaishyas, shudras, women, outcastes and those who were dominated by rajas and tamas in their nature. There were Vrishaparva, Bali, Bana, Maya, Vibhishana, Sugriva, Hanuman, Riksha, [1083] the elephant, the eagle, [1084] Vanikpatha, [1085] the hunter, [1086] the gopis from Vraja and the wives of the brahmanas who were performing the sacrifice. They did not study large numbers of sacred texts. They did not worship great people. They did not observe vows, or torment themselves through austerities. They associated with those who were devoted to me and obtained me. It is only through de-

votion towards me that gopis, cattle, trees, [1087] animals and others with inferior intelligence and nagas [1088] became successful and easily obtained me. However, I cannot be obtained by making efforts through yoga, samkhya, donations, vows, austerities, sacrifices, expounding of the sacred texts, studying and sannyasa. With Rama, Shvaphalka [1089] brought me to Mathura. Because of their intense love, their [1090] hearts were devoted to me. As a result of separation from me, they suffered from great distress and could not find any happiness. I was their dearly beloved and they had spent nights with me in Vrindavana. When I was with them, they seemed to pass like half a kshana. O dear one! However, without me, it was like a kalpa. Rivers that enter the waters of the ocean no longer retain their names and forms. This is also true of sages immersed in meditation. Like that, bound in their association with me, their minds could not think of their own selves, or anything near or far. Those women desired me as a lover and did not know about my true form. However, through their association with me, hundreds and thousands of them obtained the supreme brahman. O Uddhava! Therefore, give up the primary injunctions and the secondary injunctions, pravritti and nivritti, what has been learnt and what is yet to be learnt. Seek refuge in me alone. I am in the atmans of all embodied creatures. Those who seek me with all their souls are granted freedom from fear by me."

'Uddhava said, "O lord of the lords of yoga! I have heard your words. But there is still a doubt and it does not go away. Therefore, my mind is in a whirl."

'The illustrious one replied, "He manifests himself inside the jivatman who has been given life. Through the sound of prana, he enters the cave. He assumes a subtle mental form. He is *matra, svara, varna* and *sthavishtha*. [1091] The fire exists as space in kindling. When two pieces of kindling are rubbed together with force, it is kindled by the heat and the wind acts like a friend and fans it. When a small spark has been ignited, oblations make it blaze up. That is the way I am manifested through speech. Like speech, action, locomotion, evacuation of urine and excrement, smell, taste, sight, touch, hearing, resolution, vijnana, ego, Pradhana and the transformations of sattva, rajas and tamas are my manifestations. I am the one who gives

life. I am the refuge of the three gunas. I am the source of the cosmic lotus. I am unmanifest. I am alone and absolute. In the course, I divide and manifest my potencies in many different ways. I am like the seeds that appear in fields. Like a piece of cloth exists in the warp and woof of threads, I am woven into the universe and exist in it. This tree of samsara is ancient and based on karma. It yields flowers and fruits. It has two seeds, one hundred roots and three stalks. [1092] There are five major branches and these give rise to five kinds of juice. [1093] There are eleven smaller branches and two birds in the nest, with three kinds of bark. [1094] There are two fruits and they enter the sun. [1095] Vultures that dwell in villages [1096] eat only one kind of fruit. There are others who reside in the forest and eat the other kind of fruit. They are the swans [1097] who worship the absolute who appears in many kinds of forms. A person who knows that all this is formed out of maya is a person who truly knows. In this way, worship the preceptor; have single-minded devotion towards me; use the sharp axe of knowledge; persevere, sever the residence of the jivatman; be without distraction; realize the atman; after that, cast aside the weapon."' [1098]

Chapter 11(13)

'The illustrious one said, "The gunas of sattva, rajas and tamas concern the intelligence, not the atman. Using sattva, one should destroy the other two. Then, one should use sattva to subdue sattva. Through sattva, dharma is enhanced and a person develops the signs of devotion towards me. Sattva develops from the use of things that are *sattvika* in nature and dharma is furthered through this. Dharma destroys rajas and tamas and there is the excellent outcome of sattva being enhanced. When these two are destroyed, the foundation of adharma is quickly destroyed. A guna is the outcome of ten things—sacred texts, offspring, the place, time, karma, birth, meditation, mantras and samskaras. Among these, what the elders have spoken about is sattvika. What they have criticized is *tamasika*. What they are indifferent to is *rajasika*. For the enhancement of sattva, a man must cultivate things that

are sattvika. That leads to dharma. That leads to jnana. That drives away loss of memory. A fire is generated from the friction of bamboos and that burns down the forest of bamboos. In that way, the body is the consequence of disequilbrium among the gunas and their interaction destroys it."

'Uddhava asked, "O Krishna! Mortal people generally know that gratification due to material objects is the cause of hardships. Nevertheless, like dogs, mules and goats, why do they pursue them?"

'The illustrious one replied, "It is ahamkara that leads to this perversion of intelligence and the heart becomes distracted. Though the mind is born from sattva, terrible rajas takes over. When the mind is full of rajas, resolutions and doubts result. In evil-minded people, this leads to thinking about the qualities of desirable things and this is impossible to resist. He is not in control of his senses and overtaken by desire, he performs corresponding acts. Though he can see the hardships this will bring about, he is confounded by the force of rajas. Even if a learned person's intelligence is agitated by rajas and tamas, with an unwavering mind, he must clearly see the taints and not get attached. Without getting distracted and distressed, he must gradually fix his mind on me, having conquered his breathing and having conquered his posture. This is the yoga that was taught to my disciples, Sanaka and the others. This is the means of withdrawing the mind and immersing it in me."

'Uddhava asked, "O Keshava! When, and in what form, did you instruct Sanaka and the others about this yoga? I wish to know about this."

'The illustrious one replied, "Sanaka and the others were born through the mental powers of Hiranyagarbha. [1099] They asked their father about the subtle yoga that leads to the supreme destination.'

'"'Sanaka and the others asked, 'O lord! The mind gets attracted to the attributes of material objects and those attributes enter the mind. How can one give up the relationship between the two? How can a person who desires liberation transcend these?'"

'The illustrious one continued, "The great divinity, Svayambhu, the creator of beings, was asked in this way. However, his mind was fixed on the act of creation and he could not identify the fundamental answer. The divin-

ity wished to know the ultimate answer to the question and thought about me. I appeared before him in the form of a swan. Seeing me, with Brahma at the forefront, they approached me and worshipped my feet. They asked, 'Who are you?' The sages wished to know about the truth and asked me this. O Uddhava! Listen to what I told them. 'O brahmanas! If this differentiation and multiplicity does not exist in the atman, how can such a question arise? What is the basis for me to answer? [1100] All living beings are made out of the five elements and therefore, they are essentially the same. "Who are you?" is a question whose words mean nothing. Everything perceived by the mind, spoken about in speech, seen through the eyes, or visualized by the other senses, is nothing but me. You must understand this. O offspring! The mind gets attracted to the attributes of material objects and the attributes enter the minds. In the jivatman's body, both the attributes and the mind relate to an atman that has me as the basis. Repeatedly realizing my form, a person must give up both—the attributes of material objects that enter the mind and the material objects, which also result from the mind. Being awake, sleeping and sushupti are states of the mind caused by the gunas. As a witness, the jivatman should ascertain that he is distinct from them. Because of the functioning of the gunas, the jivatman is bound to samsara. He should immerse himself in me, the state of turiya. He should thus renounce and discard both the attributes of material objects and the mind. Ahamkara creates the bondage of the atman and leads to its hardships. Therefore, a learned person must be detached and must give up all thoughts of samsara, basing himself on the turiya state. As long as a man does not use his reasoning to free his intelligence of this notion of many kinds of diversity, he is ignorant. Even though he is awake, he is asleep, like a person who takes himself to be awake in his dreams. Any states of existence that are separate from the atman, any differences that are created by them and any such objectives and causes are not real. They are false, like things seen in a dream. In a state of wakefulness, a person who is a lord of the senses uses his senses of perception and action to experience all external objects, knowing that their nature is temporary; in a state of sleep, he does that mentally; and in a state of sushupti, he withdraws them. He alone understands

the functioning of the three states and remembers himself. Having thus considered the gunas, the mind and the three states of consciousness, one must firmly arrive at the determination that these have been caused by my maya and are imposed on me. [1101] Inference and the words of the virtuous are the sharp sword of jnana that can be used to sever the sources of all doubts that are in the heart. Hence, worship me. One must see that this universe is an illusion caused by the working of the mind. It can be seen today, but it will be destroyed tomorrow. It is extremely evanescent, like the circle of fire caused by a firebrand. In vijnana, it exists as one. It appears in many forms because of maya. The three states of consciousness, sleeping and the others, are caused by the transformation of the gunas. They are nothing but perception. Therefore, one must withdraw one's vision and refrain from all kinds of thirst. One must be silent and experience happiness in one's own atman. For this world, one must not strive for anything. Using one's intelligence, it can be observed that nothing in this material world is real. Until the moment of death, one must remember this and give up this illusion. A person who is a Siddha has comprehended his true nature. He does not notice whether this transient body is standing, or is seated. He does not care whether this body is destroyed by destiny, or whether he obtains a new one through destiny. [1102] This is like a person intoxicated with liquor not noticing whether he is wearing clothes or not. Karma has brought this body into being and therefore, it continues to strive, remaining alive and waiting. However, it is under the control of destiny. Established in *samadhi yoga*, one must transcend these illusory manifestations. Like a woken up from a dream, such a person does not serve the unreal. O brahmanas! I have spoken to you about the secret of samkhya and yoga. Know me as Yajna, [1103] who has come here with the intention of teaching you about dharma. I am the objective of samkhya, yoga, *satyam*, [1104] *ritam*, energy, prosperity, fame and self-control. O best among brahmanas! I am the ultimate refuge. All the gunas find a refuge in me. I am nirguna and am non-attached. I am the beloved friend of the atman. I exist everywhere and am without any kind of attachment. I am devoid of gunas.' Thus, the doubts of Sanaka and the other sages were dispelled. They worshipped me with supreme devotion. They

praised me and chanted about me. Those supreme rishis worshipped me and honoured me properly. While they and Parameshthi [1105] looked on, I returned to my own abode."'

Chapter 11(14)

'Uddhava asked, "O Krishna! Those who know about the brahman speak about many ways of ensuring benefit. Many kinds of alternatives are spoken about as being important. Is there one that is the most important? O master! You have spoken about bhakti yoga and removing all kinds of desires and attachments, whereby, the mind becomes immersed in you."

'The illustrious one replied, "These words of mine came to be known as the Vedas. In the course of time, they were destroyed in the deluge. I originally spoke about it to Brahma, the dharma of devoting one's self to me. He spoke about it to his eldest son, Manu. The seven brahmana rishis, Bhrigu and the others, learnt it from him. The offspring learnt it from these ancestors—gods, danavas, guhyakas, humans, Siddhas, gandharvas, vidyadharas, charanas, *kindeva*s, [1106] kinnaras, nagas, rakshasas, *kimpurusha*s and others. However, their natures were affected by different combinations of sattva, rajas and tamas. These differences contributed to differences among creatures and their leaders. It is because of these differences in nature that colourful words [1107] flowed out. In this way, because of diversity in nature, there are differences in the views of men. Some of this occurred because of the nature of transmission. There were others who came to hold heretical views. O bull among men! The minds of men were confounded by my maya. Therefore, depending on their activities and their proclivities, they spoke about many kinds of ways of ensuring benefit. Some speak only of dharma. [1108] Others speak of kama. Others speak of truthfulness, self-control and serenity. Others speak of selfish ends and prosperity. Some speak of renunciation and fasting. Others speak of sacrifices, austerities, donations, vows, niyama and yama. All the worlds obtained through karma have a beginning and an end. They inevitably give rise to misery, darkness, inferiori-

ty, wretchedness and lamentation. O noble one! Those who have immersed their atmans in me do not have desire in any form. With their atmans in me, they enjoy a happiness that cannot be obtained by those who pursue material objects. He does not possess anything. He is controlled and serene. He regards everything impartially. His mind is satisfied in me. All the directions bring him happiness. With his atman immersed in me, he desires nothing other than me—not the states of Parameshthi, the great Indra, lordship, sovereignty over the earth, sovereignty over the nether regions, the siddhis of yoga, or emancipation from samsara. I do not love the self-created one, [1109] Shankara, Samkarshana, Shri or my own self as much as I love you. [1110] Such a sage is serene, without any desires. He is without enmity and is impartial in vision. I always follow such a person, so that I can be purified by the dust of his lotus feet. With his mind devoted to me, he desires nothing. He is tranquil. He is a great soul who is compassionate towards all creatures. His intelligence is not affected by the objects of desire he has not obtained. He is devoted to me and without any desires, experiences a happiness not obtained by anyone else. A person who is devoted to me may not have conquered his senses. Therefore, he may be agitated by the objects of desire. But because his devotion is powerful, he will not be overcome by the objects of the senses. O Uddhava! The flames of a blazing fire reduce the kindling to ashes. Just like that, devotion towards me burns down all sins. O Uddhava! What is achieved by strong devotion towards me is not achieved by yoga, samkhya, dharma, studying, austerities or renunciation. My atman can only be grasped through devotion. I am dear to the virtuous. Even if a person is born as a *svapacha*, devotion and faith towards me purifies him. Without devotion towards me, a person cannot completely purify himself through dharma, truth, compassion, learning and austerities. Without the body hair standing up, without the heart being melted, without tears of bliss flowing from the eyes, without devotion, how can the consciousness be purified? If a person is filled with devotion towards me, he purifies the universe. His speech is choked. His heart melts. He weeps repeatedly. Sometimes, he smiles. Without any shame, he sings and dances. Heated in a fire, gold gives up all its impurities and regains its pure form. When I am

worshipped through bhakti yoga, the atman is cleansed from the impurities of karma. The more one hears about my sacred accounts and chants them, the atman is cleansed. Accordingly, a person perceives the subtle truth, like the eye when it is treated with medicinal collyrium. When the mind thinks about material objects, it gets attached to material objects. When the mind remembers me, it becomes absorbed in me. Therefore, like the wishes in a dream, everything material must be given up. The mind must be fixed in me and must think about me. A person who knows about his atman must keep women, and those who associate with women, far away. Fearless, he must be seated in a solitary spot, single-mindedly thinking about me. In that state, there is no hardship and no bondage that results from other associations. This is unlike a man who associate with women or associates with those who associate with them."

'Uddhava asked, "O lotus-eyed one! If a person desires to meditate on you, what is the nature of your form that he should use? You should tell me about how he should meditate."

'The illustrious one replied, "He must be comfortably seated on a level seat. He must be upright. His palms must be gathered together on his lap. He must fix his eyes on the tip of his nose. Through *puraka, kumbhaka* and *rechaka*, he must purify the path of prana. [1111] He must gradually reverse the process and conquer all his senses. Like the thread that runs up the stem of a lotus, he must continuously raise his prana upwards to his heart, to the sound of *omkara*, which resounds like the sound of a bell. There, prana must be merged with the vibrations of the sound. In this way, he must practise prana being united with the sound of omkara. Thrice a day, morning, noon and evening, this must be done ten times. Within a month, he will then obtain control over prana. He must contemplate that the heart inside his body is like a lotus, with the stalk facing upwards. This lotus, with eight petals, has bloomed and the pericarp faces upwards. One after another, the sun, the moon and the fire are placed in his pericarp. He must remember my auspicious form inside the fire and meditate on it. My form is serene and symmetrical, with an excellent face. My four arms are long and beautiful. His neck is charming and beautiful. I have excellent cheeks, with a pure

smile. My symmetrical ears are adorned with dazzling earrings that are shaped like makaras. My garments are golden yellow and my complexion is dark blue. The shrivatsa mark is on my chest, Shri's abode. I am ornamented with a conch shell, a chakra, a mace, a lotus and a garland of wild flowers. My feet have shining anklets. Koustubha adds to my radiance. I wear a resplendent diadem, bracelets, armlets and a girdle. All my limbs are beautiful and charming. My supreme glance bestows favours. He must fix his mind on all my charming limbs and meditate on them. He must withdraw his mind from the senses and the objects of the senses, which distract the mind. A persevering person will use his intelligence like the driver of a chariot. He will fix everything in me. When the consciousness has spread over all of my limbs, it must then be withdrawn and fixed on only one specific limb. All the thoughts must be gathered and fixed on my smiling and handsome face. Once that state has been attained, the consciousness must be withdrawn and fixed on the sky. Having given that up next, he ascends upwards to me and thinks of nothing else. In this way, his intelligence is controlled and immersed in me. He sees my atman in his atman. He sees me in all atmans, like a blaze of light united with other lights. The yogi's mind is thus fixed in extremely intense meditation. Perceptions and illusions about material objects and their functions quickly vanish and he achieves nirvana."'

Chapter 11(15)

'The illustrious one said, "If a yogi conquers his senses, conquers his breath and fixes his consciousness in me, the siddhis appear before him."

'Uddhava asked, "O Achyuta! What is the type of meditation and what is its form? How many siddhis are there? You are the one who bestows siddhis on yogis. Tell me about this."

'The illustrious one replied, "Those who are accomplished in the yoga of meditation have said that there are eighteen siddhis. Among these, eight are major and are in me. The other ten have the gunas as a cause. [1112] O amiable

one! It is held that there are eight supernormal powers [1113] that have an origin in me—anima, mahima, burdening the body, laghima, using the senses for prapti, prakamya over visible and invisible things, using powers for the sake of *ishita* and *vashita*, so that one is not attached to the gunas. Through these, one can get whatever one wants. Immunity from any changes in the body; the ability to hear and see from a distance; the power to use the mind to travel; the ability to assume any form one wants; to enter someone else's body; to die whenever one wills; the ability to see the gods play; the ability to play with them; the capacity to accomplish one's resolutions; and like a king, to be unimpeded in progress. [1114] The ability to know the past, the present and the future; the power to transcend the opposite pairs of sentiments; the ablity to decipher the minds of others; the power to counter the effects of fire, sun, water and poison; the ability to remain undefeated—these have also been described as siddhis obtained through yoga and meditation. I will tell you which is obtained through what process of meditation. Listen. If a person worships me as existing in the form of the tanmatras and meditates on my subtle atman existing in the elements, he obtains the power of anima. If a person fixes his mind on my atman existing in pervasive form in the tattva of Mahat, he obtains mahima. As he separately meditates on each element, he obtains the pervasive nature of that element. If a person fixes his mind on me being attached to the paramanus of the elements and on me as the subtle form of time, that yogi obtains laghima. If a person is immersed in me and meditates on me as *vaikarika ahamkara* and on me existing in all the senses, he obtains prapti. If a person fixes his mind and meditates on my atman existing in the *sutra* of Mahat, an unmanifest form that cannot be perceived, he obtains the supreme power of prakamya. Vishnu is the lord of the three gunas, time is his personified form. If a person meditates with me in his mind in this form, he obtains ishita over all bodies and can urge their souls too. I am Narayana, known as turiya. I am addressed by the name of Bhagavan. If a yogi fixes his mind on me in this form, he obtains my attributes and the power of vashita. If a person purifies his mind and meditates on me in the form of the *nirguna brahman*, he obtains the supreme state of bliss, known as *kamavasiyata*. [1115] I am pure and

the lord of Shvetadvipa. I am full of dharma. If a man fixes his mind on me and meditates on me in this form, he becomes white in complexion and is freed from the six changes. [1116] I am the atman in the sky. I am the transcendental vibrations. I am prana. If a person meditates on me in this form, such a hamsa can hear the speech of all creatures. The vision must be united with the sun and the sun must be united with the vision. If a person uses his mind to meditate on me in this form, he can see anything in the universe, even from a distance. When the mind, the body and the breath of life are immersed in me and a person meditates on me, through that power, the person can transport his body to wherever the mind wants. Whatever form the mind wants to assume, whatever form the mind thinks of, a person is able to appear in that form. This happens by resorting to the strength of my yoga. If a Siddha wants to enter another person's body, he must meditate on himself in that other person's body. Just as a bee moves from a flower to another flower, his prana will then leave his body, travel through the air and then enter the other person's body. A person blocks his anus with the heel of his foot, raising the prana up from the heart to the throat, the head and the crown of the head. [1117] He propels it through the aperture in the crown of the head, leaves his body and attains the brahman. If a person wishes to amuse himself with the gods, he must meditate on me in the form of sattva. Celestial women, who are full of sattva by nature, will then arrive before him in vimanas. If a man unites his mind in me, the supreme truth, he obtains whatever resolution his intelligence has sought to achieve. I am the lord. If a man is full of me and meditates on me as the lord, how can he be frustrated in any way? His command is like my own. If a yogi has become pure because of his devotion to me and if he knows about the process of meditation, he can know about the past, the present and the future and about birth and death. If a sage's body has been perfected with yoga, fire and other things cannot harm him, just as aquatic creatures are not harmed by water. Because of yoga towards me, his mind is serene. My opulent form is ornamented with shrivatsa, weapons, the standard, the umbrella and whisks. If a person meditates on this, he cannot be defeated. If a devoted sage uses yoga to meditate on me, he approaches me in every way and obtains the siddhis

that have been described earlier. If a sage has conquered his senses, if he is controlled and if he has conquered his breath of life and his mind, if he is immersed in me and meditates on me, what siddhi will be impossible for him to obtain? But those who are engaged in supreme yoga say that these are nothing but impediments. For those who wish to obtain me, these are nothing but a waste of time. Birth, herbs, austerities and mantras can accomplish siddhis. But all these can be obtained through yoga and the destination obtained by yoga cannot be obtained through these other means. I am the cause and the master of all these siddhis. I am the lord of yoga, samkhya, dharma and those who speak about the brahman. I cannot be covered and am inside and outside all embodied beings. The elements exist inside and outside all beings and I am myself like that."'

Chapter 11(16)

'Uddhava said, "You are yourself the supreme brahman. You have no beginning and no end. You are not covered. You are the source of the creation, preservation and destruction of all beings. You exist in all beings, superior and inferior. For those who have not cleansed their atmans, you are impossible to comprehend. O illustrious one! Brahmanas worship you exactly as you are. The supreme rishis have devotedly worshipped you and obtained success. What are the forms in which they have worshipped you? Please tell me. O creator of all beings! Though you are in the atmans of all creatures, your movements are hidden. Though you see them, because they are confounded, the beings cannot see you. O one who is great in powers! What are your powers on earth, in heaven, in the nether regions and in the directions? Please explain those manifestations to me. I bow down before you. Your lotus feet are a refuge for all tirthas."

'The illustrious one replied, "O supreme among those who know how to ask questions! The question that you have asked me is exactly the question that Arjuna, wishing to fight with his rivals, asked me at the time of the destructive battle. For the sake of the kingdom, he was aware that slaying the

king was reprehensible adharma. He refrained, thinking, 'They will be killed and I will be the slayer.' He thought in this worldly way. At that time, using reasoning, I made that tiger among men understand. In the field of the battle, he spoke to me in the way that you are doing now. O Uddhava! I am the atman, the controller and the well-wisher of all beings. I am in all beings and exist as the creator, the preserver and the destroyer. For those who move, I am the one who makes them move. I am time, the one who controls everyone. I am the equilibrium of the gunas. I am the attributes among those who naturally possess attributes. I am the sutra that strings together the gunas among those who possess them. Among those that are large, I am the great principle of Mahat. Among those that are subtle, I am the principle of life. Among those who cannot be conquered, I am the mind. Among the Vedas, I am Hiranyagarbha. [1118] Among mantras, I am 'Oum', consisting of three syllables. Among letters of the alphabet, I am the first letter, 'A'. Among metres, I am *gayatri*. [1119] Among all the gods, I am Indra. Among all the Vasus, I am the one who bears oblations. [1120] Among all the Adityas, I am Vishnu. Among all the Rudras, I am Nilalohita. [1121] Among all the brahmana rishis, I am Bhrigu. Among all the royal sages, I am Manu. Among all the devarshis, I am Narada. Among all the cows, I am the one who supplies oblations. [1122] Among all the lords of siddhis, I am Kapila. Among all the birds, I am Suparna. Among all the Prajapatis, I am Daksha. Among all the ancestors, I am Aryama. O Uddhava! Among all the daityas, know me to be Prahlada, the lord of the asuras. Among the nakshatras and the herbs, I am Soma. Among the yakshas and the rakshasas, I am the lord of riches. [1123] Among the Indras of the elephants, I am Airavata. Among aquatic creatures, I am Lord Varuna. Among those who heat and illuminate, I am Surya. Among human beings, I am the king. Among horses, I am Uchaihshrava. Among metals, I am gold. Among those who chastise, I am Yama. Among snakes, I am Vasuki. Among Indras of the nagas, I am Ananta. Among those with horns and teeth, I am the lion. O unblemished one! I am the fourth ashrama and the first varna. Among tirthas and rivers that flow, I am Ganga. Among bodies of water, I am the ocean. Among weapons, I am the bow. Among those who wield bows, I am the destroyer

of Tripura. [1124] Among all abodes, I am Meru. Among inaccessible places, I am the Himalayas. Among trees, I am the ashvattha. Among plants, I am barley. Among priests, I am Vasishtha. Among those who know about the brahman, I am Brihaspati. Among all the commanders of armies, I am Skanda. Among all the foremost ones, I am the illustrious Aja. [1125] Among sacrifices, I am sacrifices at which the Vedas are recited. Among vows, I am non-violence. Among things that purify, wind, fire, sun, water and speech, I am the power of purification. Among the different stages of yoga, I am *samadhi*. Among those who seek to conquer, I am wise counsel. Among those who seek to inquire, I am skill. Among those who engage in philosophical debate, I am diversity of views. Among women, I am Shatarupa. Among men, I am Svayambhuva Manu. Among sages, I am Narayana. Among *brahmachari*s, I am Kumara. [1126] Among different kinds of dharma, I am *sannyasa*. Among different kinds of assurance, I am the intelligence that exists internally. Among methods of ensuring secrecy, I am pleasant speech and silence. Among different kinds of couples, I am Aja. [1127] Among the different measures of time, I am the year. Among the seasons, I am spring. Among the months, I am Margashirsha. Among the nakshatras, I am Abhijit. Among the yugas, I am krita. Among those who are patient, I am Asita and Devala. Among all those known as Vyasa, I am Dvaipayana. Among wise ones, I am Kavya, [1128] who knew about the atman. Among illustrious ones, I am Vasudeva. Among those who are devoted to the illustrious one, I am you. Among kimpurushas, I am Hanuman. Among vidyadharas, I am Sudarshana. Among gems, I am the ruby. Among delicate and lovely objects, I am the bud of a lotus. Among different kinds of *darbha* grass, I am kusha. Among oblations, I am oblations that come from a cow's milk. Among merchants, I am Lakshmi. Among gamblers, I am the attribute of deceit. Among those who tolerate, I am the quality of tolerating. Among those who are enterprising, I am the attribute of enterprise. Among the powerful, I am physical and mental strength. Know me to be the devoted activities my devotees engage in. My devotees worship me in nine forms. [1129] Among these, I am the original and primary form. [1130] Among the gandharvas, I am Vishvavasu. Among the apsaras, I am Purvachitti. I am the stabili-

ty of the mountains. In earth, I am the attribute of smell. Among liquids, I am the taste in the water. Among objects that are extremely radiant, I am the sun. I am the radiance of the sun, the moon and the stars. I am the transcendental sound in the sky. Among those who are devoted to brahmanas, I am Bali. Among those who are brave, I am Arjuna. I am the lord of the creation, preservation and destruction of beings. [1131] I am the function of the organs of action, movement, speech, excretion, receiving and pleasure, [1132] and also that of touch, taste, hearing, sight and smell. I am the power behind all the senses. I am the subtle forms of earth, air, space, water, fire, ahamkara and Mahat. I am the transformations. I am Prakriti and Purusha. I am sattva, rajas and tamas. I am the supreme one. I am all that has been ascertained about the truth and spoken about. I am jnana. I am the quality of life in living beings. I am the gunas and the quality of these gunas. I am in all atmans. I am in everything. Nothing exists without me. Over a period of time, even if I count all the paramanus, I will not be able to count all my opulences. I create crores of cosmic eggs. Energy, prosperity, fame, affluence, modesty, renunciation, good fortune, the quality of being pleasant, valour, fortitude and knowledge—in all of these, my manifestations exist. I have briefly described all my opulences to you. These are nothing but transformations of the mind and are described in various ways through words. Control your speech. Control your mind. Control your breath of life. Control your senses. Use your atman to control yourself, so that you do not descend into material existence yet again. If a mendicant does not properly control his speech and mind through his intelligence, his vows, austerities and gifts leak out, like water from a pot that has not been baked. Therefore, with devotion towards me, control your speech, mind and breath of life. Using the intelligence to be fixed in devotion towards me, one completes the process.”’ [1133]

Chapter 11(17)

‘Uddhava said, “You have earlier spoken about the dharma that is characterized by bhakti, to be observed by those who follow the varnas and the ashramas and all men. [1134] O lotus-eyed one! When men are engaged in their own dharma, what can they do to increase their devotion towards you? You should tell me this. O mighty-armed one! O lord! O Madhava! Earlier, in the form of a swan, you spoke about this supreme dharma to Brahma. O destroyer of enemies! However, a long period of time has passed since then. What you had instructed earlier, is not generally witnessed in the mortal world. O Achyuta! With your exception, there is no one on earth, not even in Virinchi’s assembly, which the arts attend in personified form, who can propound, act or protect that dharma. O god! O Madhusudana! You are the propounder, the performer and the protector. When you leave the surface of the earth, it will be destroyed. Who will speak about it? You know about all the forms of dharma. Therefore, speak to me about the dharma that is characterized by *bhakti* towards you. Who should practise it and in what form? O lord! Please describe this.”’

Shri-Shuka said, ‘Thus addressed by the foremost among his servants, the illustrious Hari was pleased. For the benefit of mortals, he spoke about this eternal dharma.

‘The illustrious one replied, “Your question is about this dharma and it brings the greatest benefit to men who follow the varnas and the ashramas. O Uddhava! Listen to me. In the beginning, in *krita yuga*, there was only one varna among men and it was known as hamsa. As soon as they were born, subjects accomplished their objectives. That is the reason the learned called it krita yuga. [1135] In that first age, all the Vedas were there in ‘Oum’. In the form of a bull, I held up dharma. [1136] Engaged in austerities and free of sins, the hamsas worshipped me. O immensely fortunate one! At the beginning of *treta yuga*, the three Vedas were manifested from my heart as my breath of life. From that knowledge, I was manifested as the three parts of

the sacrifice. [1137] From the cosmic Purusha, four categories were born—brahmanas from the mouth, kshatriyas from the arms, vaishyas from the thighs and shudras from the feet. They were characterized by their own conduct. *Garhasthya* appeared from my loins, brahmacharya from my heart, *vanaprastha* from my chest and sannyasa from the top of my head. The varnas and the ashramas followed the order in which they were created. The higher the position, the higher the order of men. The lower the position, the lower the order. The natural attributes of brahmanas are control over the mind, control over the senses, austerities, purity, contentment, fortitude, uprightness, devotion towards me, compassion and truthfulness. The natural attributes of kshatriyas are energy, strength, perseverance, valour, tolerance, generosity, enterprise, steadiness, prosperity and devotion towards brahmanas. The natural attributes of vaishyas are faith, devotion to donating, lack of hypocrisy, dissatisfaction towards wealth [1138] and service towards brahmanas. The natural attributes of shudras are lack of duplicity in serving brahmanas, cattle and gods and satisfaction with whatever has been obtained. The natural attributes of those who are outside the varna system are lack of cleanliness, dishonesty, theft, hereticism, pointless quarrelling, lust, anger and avarice. For all the varnas, dharma consists of non-violence, truth, honesty, lack of desire, anger and greed and a desire to ensure the pleasure and welfare of all beings.

'"A dvija obtains a second birth by gradually going through the investiture of the sacred thread ritual. Controlling himself, he resides in his *guru*'s household and when summoned by the preceptor, studies the sacred texts. During brahmacharya, he wears a girdle made out of munja grass and garments made out of deerskin. He carries a staff, a string of rudraksha beads, the sacred thread and a kamandalu. His hair is matted. His garments must not be washed. [1139] He must not use a polished seat. Instead, he must carry kusha grass for sitting. He must not speak while bathing, eating, offering oblations, chanting mantras and passing stool and urine. He must not clip his nails. Nor must he cut his hair, including that on his chest or in the pubic region. As long as he follows the vow of brahmacharya, he must never voluntarily allow the passing of semen. It is oozes out involuntarily, he must

bathe, practise pranayama and chant the gayatri mantra. Pure and controlled, he must perform worship during the two sandhyas, silently chanting the mantras. He must worship the fire, the sun, the preceptor, cattle, brahmanas, seniors, the aged and the gods. He must know that the preceptor is my own form and never show him disrespect. All the gods exist in the guru. Thinking that he is a mere mortal, one must never envy him. Any alms that have been obtained in the morning and the evening through begging, must be offered to him. Controlling oneself, one must accept whatever has been permitted by the preceptor. Like an inferior person, one must always serve and worship the preceptor. When he goes out, sleeps or is seated, one must be nearby, hands joined in salutation. In this way, devoid of any material gratification, he must reside in his guru's household. Until the process of learning has been completed, he must never deviate from his vows. If he wishes to ascend to Maharloka or Brahmaloka, he must observe that great vow of celibacy throughout his life. For the sake of studying, he must offer his body to the preceptor. I am the supreme, present in the fire, the preceptor, his own atman and in all creatures. He must worship me in this undifferentiated way and resplendent with the radiance of the brahman, he will be cleansed of all sins. A person not in garhasthya must not look at women, touch them, converse with them or joke with them. Nor must he look at creatures engaged in sexual intercourse. O delight of the lineage! There are some rules that are applicable to all the ashramas. These are purity, touching water before any sacred rite, bathing, worship at the time of sandhya, worshipping me, visiting tirthas, chanting, not touching what should not be touched, not eating what should not be eaten, not speaking to those who should not be spoken to, control over mind, speech and body and visualizing me in all creatures. In this way, a brahmana who observes the great vow blazes like a fire. He burns down the store of karma through fierce austerities and devotion towards me. He becomes pure.

'"After having studied the sacred texts properly, a student may wish to enter garhasthya. He must pay his *guru dakshina* and with the guru's permission, must bathe. He may either go to the forest, or enter garhasthya. An excellent dvija who is not devoted to me must always move from one ashra-

ma to another ashrama in the proper order and never in a contrary way. [1140] A person who desires to become a householder must marry a wife who is his equal. She must be younger in age. She must be from the same varna and one progressively goes down this order. [1141] Performing sacrifices, studying and donating are meant for all dvijas. But only brahmanas can receive gifts, teach and officiate at sacrifices. If a brahmana thinks that receiving gifts will diminish his austerities, energy and fame, he can use the other two. If he sees those as unacceptable, he can resort to *shila-unchchha*. [1142] A brahmana's body must not be used for satisfying inferior objects of desire. It is meant for hardships and austerities in this world. He obtains infinite happiness after death. He must satisfy his mind with shila-unchchha. Purified of all desire, he must observe this great dharma. Even if he is a householder, he must offer himself to me and not be excessively attached. He will then obtain serenity. If a brahmana is suffering and is devoted to me, or if a person helps such a brahmana and is devoted to me, within a short period of time, I raise them above all sufferings, like a boat in the ocean. Like a father, a king must protect his subjects from all hardships, like a leader of elephants saving all elephants. He must find that perseverance within his own self. In this way, a king is cleansed of everything inauspicious. He enjoys himself with Indra, in a vimana that is as dazzling as the sun. If a brahmana is in the midst of hardships, he can survive by using the occupation of a merchant and even trade prohibited objects. [1143] When he is afflicted, he may even earn a living using the sword. However, he must never follow a dog's conduct. [1144] To earn a living, a king may follow the occupation of a vaishya and even earn a living through hunting. He may even follow a brahmana's occupation. But he must never follow a dog's conduct. A vaishya can follow a shudra's occupation. A shudra can be an artisan or make mats. However, once a person is freed from the calamity, he must not engage in occupations that are not sanctioned. According to capacity, studying, offering oblations with *svadha*, offering oblations with *svaha*, [1145] offering food to others and worshipping gods, rishis, ancestors and creatures every day, since these are my forms. [1146] Without causing hardship to dependants and using objects that have come on their own or have been purchased with

wealth obtained through legitimate means, one must perform the sacrifices. However, one should not get attached to the family. Nor should one neglect the family. A learned person sees that what cannot be seen is just as temporary as what can be seen. [1147] Sons, wives, relatives and friends are like travellers meeting. When sleep is over, what is seen in a dream is no longer there. Like that, when the body changes, there is separation from these too. Considering this, a person who has been liberated resides in his household like a guest. He is not bound to the house. He is without a sense of 'I' and 'mine'. While performing the tasks of a householder and remaining in that state, he should be devoted to me. Or, if he has had children, he can leave for vanaprastha or sannyasa. A person whose mind is attached to the household is afflicted by the desire for sons and wealth. He is attached to women and his mind becomes miserly and foolish. He is bound down by notions of 'I' and 'mine'. 'Alas! My aged parents. My wife and my infant children. Without me, they won't have a protector and will be distressed. Miserable, how will they remain alive?' Thus, the heart of a person who is attached to the household is agitated. His intelligence is foolish. Thinking about these, he is dissatisfied. When he dies, he enters blinding darkness."'

Chapter 11(18)

'The illustrious one said, "When a person goes to the forest, he can take his wife with him, or entrust her to the care of his sons. The third quarter of the lifespan should be spent in serenity in the forest. Subsistence must be ensured through bulbs, roots and fruits that grow in the middle of the forest. When residing in the forest, garments must be made out of bark, grass, leaves or deerskin. He must not clean his hair, body hair, beard or dirt on the body. He must not brush his teeth. He must immerse himself in the water thrice a day. [1148] He must sleep on the ground. In the summer, he must torment himself through five fires. [1149] During monsoon, he must stand in the rain. In the winter, he must submerge himself in water, up to the neck. He must perform austerities in this way. He can eat what has been cooked in

the fire, or what has ripened in the course of time. The food can be ground with a pestle, or the teeth can be used as pestle and mortar. He must himself collect whatever is required for his subsistence, considering what is right for the time and the place and what he is capable of. He must not accept anything from anyone else. He can perform seasonal sacrifices by making cakes out of forest fare. However, a person in vanaprastha ashrama must not worship me through animal sacrifices mentioned in the shruti texts. While residing in the forest, aghihotra, *darsha*, *pournamasa* and *chaturmasya* sacrifices [1150] can be performed, as he used to do earlier. These are sanctioned by the sacred texts. Through the observance of such austerities, the sage seems to be covered with veins everywhere. Worshipping me with such austerities over a long period of time, he goes to the world of the rishis and obtains me. These extremely difficult austerities, performed over a long period of time, are for the sake of great benefit. Who but a fool will engage in such austerities for the sake of gratifying the senses? When his body starts to tremble and he is no longer capable of observing these rituals because of old age, he must ignite the fire within his atman. With his mind immersed in me, he must enter the fire.

'"Karma obtains various things, including worlds that are no better than hell. When a person has completely cast aside the fires [1151] he can leave for sannyasa. Having worshipped me through the instructed sacrifices, he must give everything away to the officiating priests. He must withdraw the fires within his own prana and without any attachment, must take to sannyasa. For a brahmana who wishes to take to sannyasa, the gods create impediments in the form of wives and other things, since he might surpass them and obtain the supreme. If the sage wishes to wear anything more than a *koupina*, [1152] he can wear another garment on top of this. Unless there is a calamity, he should not possess anything other than a staff and a water pot. He must place his foot on the ground only after it has been purified through his eyes. [1153] He must drink water only after he has strained it with his garment. He must only speak what is the truth. He must only do what his mind thinks is pure. O dear one! Unless one accepts the rules of maintaining silence, giving up desire for anything in this world and controlling the breath,

related to speech, body and the mind, one does not become a mendicant only because one has got a staff made out of bamboo. When a person roams around searching for alms, for all the four varnas, he must shun condemned households. Without any hopes, he must go to seven houses and no more and be content with whatever has been obtained. Taking this, he must go to a body of water that is outside. [1154] He must maintain silence. He must perform his ablutions. He must divide his food. [1155] Thus purified, he must completely [1156] eat whatever has been obtained. He must wander around the earth alone, without attachment and in control of his senses. He must find pleasure within his own atman. He must impartially look upon everything like his own self. He must reside in a solitary and safe place, cleaning his mind by being immersed in me. The sage must think of the atman alone, which is not different from me. Resorting to jnana, he must examine the atman and the nature of its bondage and liberation. The bondage occurs because of attachment to the senses and liberation is control over them. Therefore, controlling the six categories, [1157] the sage roams around, immersed in me. He is not attached to inferior desires. He obtains great happiness in the atman. He must travel the earth and go to sacred places, rivers, mountains, forests and hermitages. He must enter cities, villages, cowherd settlements and places where caravans gather only for the sake of alms. He must seek alms following the practice of those in vanaprastha ashrama, [1158] or practise shila-unchchha. He will then be quickly purified, become free of delusion and obtain success. He must never see reality in material objects. Anything visible will be destroyed. With the mind completely detached towards anything in this world or in the next world, he will not wish to do anything to pursue these. Through reasoning, he must establish that everything, the world, mind, speech, prana and everything else, is maya. Thus, basing himself on the atman, he must give up everything else and not remember them.

‘“My devotee who is devoted to jnana, without attachment and without desire for anything else, can give up all attributes connected to any ashrama. He can roam around, beyond these rules. Though wise, he should play like a child. Though accomplished, he should act like one who is stupid. Though learned, he should speak like a mad person. Though he knows

about the sacred texts, he should tend to cattle. He should not engage in debates about the Vedas. He is not a heretic. But he is not a debater either. In pointless arguments and counter-arguments, he should not take either side. Such a patient person does not agitate other people, nor is he agitated by other people. He should tolerate harsh words and must never disrespect anyone. For the sake of the body, like an animal, he must never exhibit enmity towards anyone. The supreme atman is one and is present in the atmans of all creatures, just as the moon is reflected in different bodies of water. Therefore, other creatures are no different from one's own self. At different times, he should not be distressed if he does not get food. At other times, he should not rejoice because he has obtained food. Fixed in his patience, he realizes that both these are the outcome of destiny. He must engage himself in trying to obtain food, since that is required for the sake of sustaining life. It is only through life that the truth can be contemplated. When one has discerned the truth, one is freed. A sage must accept whatever has come of its own accord, food, garments, bed, regardless of whether these are superior or inferior. I am the lord. Yet I engage in pastimes. Like that, a learned person must observe the rituals of cleanliness and bathing, not because he has been forced to do them. He has no sense of differentiation left. Having realized me, all that has been destroyed. However, as long as the body remains, sometimes, these perceptions recur. But after that, he merges into me. A person who has realized his atman knows that all objects of desire bring misery in the future. Therefore, non-attachment is generated. However, a sage who has not considered this dharma of devotion to me, must approach a guru. Until the devotee has got to realize the brahman as being nothing other than me, he must respectfully serve the guru with devotion and without any envy. A person who has not controlled the six categories, with the mind as the fierce charioteer of the senses, he is devoid of jnana and non-attachment. He resorts to the triple staff of sannyasa only as a means of subsistence. He destroys dharma and deceives the gods and his own atman. He also denies me. His impurities have still not ripened and he has destroyed this world and the next. The main dharma of a person in sannyasa is control and non-violence. The main dharma of a person in

vanaprastha is austerities and examination. The main dharma of a person in garhasthya is protection of creatures and the performance of sacrifices. The main dharma of a dvija in brahmacharya is serving the preceptor. Brahmacharya, [1159] austerities, purity, satisfaction, friendliness towards creatures and approaching the wife in season are the duties of a householder. Everyone should worship me. In this way, a person must follow his own dharma and worship me and nothing else. He is conscious of me existing in all creatures and thereby develops firm devotion towards me. O Uddhava! I am the great lord of all the worlds. I am the brahman. I am the cause behind the creation and destruction of everything. A person who does not deviate from being devoted towards me obtains me. Thus, a person must engage in his own dharma and purify himself, thus ascertaining my nature. He becomes full of jnana and vijnana and soon obtains me. These are the signs and conduct of the dharma of the varnas and the ashramas. When devotion towards me is added to this, a person obtains the greatest benefit. O virtuous one! I have thus described to you what you had asked me about. This is the way one follows one's own dharma and being devoted towards me, obtains me, the supreme."'

Chapter 11(19)

'The illustrious one said, "A person who possesses learning about the shruti texts, knows about the atman and does not depend on inferences, possesses the jnana that everything in the universe is only maya. Therefore, he renders everything to me. For those who possess jnana, I am the only object of worship. It is accepted that I am the goal and also the means of achieving that goal. I am the cause of happiness in heaven. I am also the cause of liberation. Therefore, other than me, nothing else is loved by him. A person who possesses jnana and vijnana knows that my state is the supreme object. I love a person who possesses jnana the most. A person who possesses jnana nurtures me. Austerities, tirthas, meditating, donations and other sacred acts do not obtain as much of success as a little bit of jnana ensures. O

Uddhava! Therefore, using jnana, you should know your own atman. With jnana and vijnana and filled with devotion towards me, worship me. Earlier, sages possessed jnana and vijnana and used these to perform sacrifices to me, the atman, within their own atmans. I am the lord of sacrifices. Therefore, approaching me, they obtained success. O Uddhava! The three kinds of transformations [1160] become attached because of maya. They suddenly appear now. They didn't exist in the beginning. Nor will they exist at the end. Birth, death and other things have to do with the body. What do they have to do with you? Something that did not exist in the beginning and will not exist at the end is unreal and only seems to exist in the middle."

'Uddhava said, "O lord of the universe! O one whose form is the universe! Please explain to me the ancient, pure and extensive nature of jnana and vijnana, which ensures non-attachment. Explain the bhakti yoga that the great seek out. In this path of samsara, I am terribly tormented and afflicted by the three kinds of miseries. [1161] O lord! I do not see any shelter other than at your two feet. They are like an umbrella and also shower down amrita. O one who is immensely powerful! This person has been bitten by the snake that is time. He has fallen into a hole and is thirsting after inferior pleasures. Show him your favours and raise him up to liberation by sprinkling your words on him."

'The illustrious one replied, "In earlier times, while all of us heard, King Ajatashatru asked Bhishma, supreme among the upholders of dharma, exactly this question. When the war among those of the Bharata lineage was over, he was overwhelmed by the destruction of his well-wishers. After hearing about many kinds of dharma, he finally asked about moksha dharma. The words emerging from Devavrata's [1162] mouth spoke about jnana, non-attachment, vijnana, faith and bhakti. I will describe those to you. I approve of the jnana through which one sees the nine, the eleven, the five and the three attributes in all creatures [1163] and the one that permeates everything. In that way, when one no longer sees this differentiation, but the single one that is the cause, this is vijnana. Such a person sees that material attributes like creation, preservation and destruction are caused by the gunas. What is created is destroyed. What is destroyed is created again. From one

creation to another, that which remains at the beginning, in the middle and at the end is the only entity that is real. Through four means—the shruti texts, direct experience, tradition and inference—one gets evidence that the material existence is transitory. Therefore, one becomes detached from this. Any karma leads to consequences and is therefore subject to transformations. It is inauspicious, even if it happens to be Virinchi's position. A learned man perceives what is visible and what is not visible in the same way. O unblemished one! Since you love me, I have already spoken about bhakti yoga to you. I will again speak about bhakti towards me, the supreme method. Faithfully listening to my immortal accounts; constant chanting of my glories; devoted worship towards me; singing hymns in my praise; affectionately serving me; using all the limbs to be prostrate before me; using great devotion to worship my devotees; the perception that I exist in all creatures; using all physical activities for my sake; using speech to sing about my qualities; surrendering the mind to me; shunning all objects of desire; for my sake, giving up wealth, objects of pleasure and happiness; dedicating sacrifices, donations, oblations, chanting, vows and austerities to me—all these generate bhakti towards me. What other objective remains to be attained? If a person dedicates himself to me, he is serene and is full of sattva. He also obtains dharma, jnana, non-attachment and every kind of opulence. When the mind is surrendered to something else, the senses run around. Know that because of this devotion to rajas and the unreal in the consciousness, perverse effects result. Dharma is stated to be that which leads to bhakti towards me. Jnana is that which sees only me in everything. Non-attachment is being delinked from the gunas. Opulence means anima and the other things."

'Uddhava asked, "O afflicter of enemies! How many kinds of yama are there? What is the *niyama* that is spoken about? What is *shama*? What is *dama*? O Krishna! O lord! What are *titiksha* and *dhriti*? What is *dana*? What is *tapas*? What is *shourya*? What is spoken of as satyam and ritam? What is *tyaga*? What *dhana* should one strive for? What is yajna? What is dakshina? What is a man's real *bala*? What is the best *bhaga*? O Keshava! What is *labha*? What is vidya? What is the supreme form of *hri*? What is

shri? What are *sukha* and *duhkha*? Who is *pandita* and who is *murkha*? What is *pantha*? What is *utpatha*? What are *svarga* and *naraka*? Who is a *bandhu* and what is a *griha*? Who is *adhya* and who is *daridra*? Who is *kripana*? Who is *ishvara*? O lord of the virtuous! Tell me the answers to these questions. Also tell me about the opposites of these attributes."

'The illustrious one replied, "Yama [1164] consists of non-violence, truthfulness, refraining from theft, lack of attachment, modesty, refraining from accumulation, belief in the sacred texts, brahmacharya, silence, steadfastness, forgiveness and fearlessness. Niyama [1165] consists of external purity, internal purity, meditating, austerities, oblations, faith, hospitality, my worship, visiting tirthas, ensuring benefit to others, contentment and service to the preceptor. These are yama and niyama and each is said to have twelve practices. O son! A man who practises them can milk all the objects of desire. Shama [1166] is being devoted to me. Dama [1167] is the control of the senses. Titiksha [1168] is tolerance of miseries. Dhriti [1169] is the conquest of the stomach and the genital organs. The supreme form of dana [1170] is abstention from using the rod against others. Tapas [1171] is said to be the giving up of desire. Shourya [1172] is victory over one's own nature. Satyam [1173] is impartiality in vision. The wise have declared that pleasant speech is ritam. [1174] Not being attached to karma is *shoucha*. [1175] Tyaga [1176] is said to be renunciation. Engaging in dharma is the desirable form of dhana. [1177] I, the supreme and illustrious one, am yajna. [1178] Dakshina is instruction about jnana. Pranayama is supreme bala. [1179] Bhaga [1180] is my divine opulence. Labha [1181] is supreme devotion towards me. Vidya [1182] is negation of differentiation in the atman. Hri [1183] is disgust towards perverse karma. Shri [1184] is indifference towards the gunas. Sukha [1185] is transcending both sukha and duhkha. Duhkha [1186] is expected sukha from objects of desire. A pandita [1187] is someone who knows about liberation from bondage. A murkha [1188] is a person whose intelligence is such that he identifies himself with his body. Pantha [1189] is said to be the path that leads to me. Utpatha [1190] is that which leads to agitation of the intelligence. Svarga [1191] is the predominance of *sattva guna*. Naraka [1192] is the predominance of tamas guna. O friend! I am the preceptor and the bandhu. [1193] A man's body is his griha. [1194] One who is full of qualities is

said to be adhya. [1195] A daridra [1196] is a person who is not satisfied. Kripana [1197] is a person who has not conquered his senses. An ishvara [1198] is a person whose intelligence is such that he is not attached to the gunas. If there is attachment to the gunas, the opposite happens. O Uddhava! I have thus clearly determined the answers to your questions. What is the need to speak more about the attributes of what is good and what is bad? Thinking about good and bad is itself bad. Being devoid of notions of both good and bad is good."'

Chapter 11(20)

'Uddhava said, "O lotus-eyed one! You are indeed the lord and the injunctions and prohibitions of the sacred texts are therefore your commands. They do talk about good and bad acts. They talk about the different types of varnas and ashramas, birth from pratiloma and *anuloma* marriages, the attributes of objects, place, age and time and heaven and hell. [1199] Without perceiving the differenece between good and bad, which have injunctions and prohibitions, how can men undersand your words? [1200] How can they ensure what is best for them? O lord! As your words, the Vedas are like eyes for ancestors, gods and men. They understand what is best, the end and the means. This insight about good and bad in the sacred texts did not evolve on its own, but comes from you. If one counters the differences in the sacred texts, there will be confusion."

'The illustrious one replied, "To ensure the best for men, I have spoken about three kinds of yoga—jnana, karma and bhakti. Other than these, no other path exists. Jnana yoga is for those who are disgusted with all karma and have given it up. Those whose minds are still not disgusted and who still desire, should resort to *karma yoga*. On its own, if devotion towards me is generated in a man, because he has heard about my accounts, even if he is not disgusted, nor excessively attached, he should obtain success through bhakti yoga. As long as one is not satisfied, or until devotion towards me has been generated by hearing about my accounts, one must perform karma.

O Uddhava! If a person is established in his own dharma and worships me without desiring anything, he will not go to heaven or hell, unless he does something perverse. In this world, if a person performs his own dharma and is unblemished and pure, he obtains pure jnana. Bhakti is a matter of chance. The residents of heaven and the residents of hell desire to be born in this world, because that can ensure success for both jnana and bhakti. Those two worlds can't ensure that success. A learned man should not crave for a destination in either heaven or hell. Nor should he desire to be born in this world. Attachment to the body leads to confusion. Knowing in advance that death is inevitable, he must unwaveringly act so as to achieve the goal of success, before death overtakes him. Men who are like death cut down a tree in which a bird has made its nest. Without being attached to its home, the bird goes elsewhere and finds peace. Knowing that the lifespan is being severed by the passage of nights and days, a person should tremble with fear. He must free himself of attachment and realize the supreme. Without any desire, he will find peace. He has easily obtained this human body, which is very difficult to obtain. It is like a well-designed boat and the guru is like a helmsman. I am like the favourable wind that propels it. After this, if a man does not cross the ocean of samsara, he is killing himself. When a person is disgusted with material pursuits, he must become detached and control his senses. Through practice, the yogi must fix his fickle mind in his atman. When the mind does not remain concentrated and starts to stray, he must not get distracted. He must use the techniques and the path to bring the atman under control. A person must retain control over where the mind is going. He must conquer his prana and conquer his senses. Using an intelligence that is full of sattva, he must bring the mind under the control of the atman. This is said to be the supreme yoga for controlling the mind, knowing and watching over the inclinations of the heart and repeatedly controlling them, like a horse. He must use samkhya to understand the nature of all material objects, their generation and their withdrawal. Observing the process of creation and destruction, the mind becomes serene. On the basis of what has been said, a man becomes disgusted and non-attached. Thinking about these, the mind gives up all wicked thoughts. Using the learning,

a person examines the path of yoga, yama and the others. The mind must remember that I am the one to be worshipped. Nothing else is worthwhile. Because of being distracted, if a yogi commits a reprehensible act, he must burn that sin down through yoga. Nothing else should be done. [1201] Depending on a person's respective status, a steady practice of what is good has been spoken about and niyama has been laid down. However, by its very nature, karma is impure. The norms of good and bad must be used by a person with the desire of giving up attachment. When devotion towards my accounts has been generated, a person develops disgust for all karma. Though he knows that all objects of desire give rise to unhappiness, he is unable to give them up. He must then happily worship me, filled with firm devotion and determination. Even if he pursues objects of desire, he must condemn them as being the cause of miseries. I have spoken about bhakti yoga, which a sage can use to completely worship me. This destroys all the desires in the heart and the heart becomes immersed in me. The bonds of the heart are severed and all the doubts are dispelled. When I am seen as the atman who exists everywhere, all karma is terminated. Thus, using bhakti yoga, a yogi is immersed in my atman. In general, in this world, neither jnana, nor non-attachment, is necessary for obtaining benefit. All the benefit that can be obtained through karma, austerities, jnana, non-attachment, yoga, donations and dharma can be obtained easily by my devotee through bhakti yoga. If he so desires, he can obtain heaven, emancipation, or my abode. Those who are my virtuous and persevering devotees are fixed in me and desire nothing else. I give them kaivalya and freedom from being born again. It has been said that indifference is the best and greatest method for obtaining benefit. Therefore, a person who is indifferent and not attached, develops devotion. Good and bad, which arise from the gunas, do not exist in those who are single-minded in their devotion to me. Those virtuous ones are impartial in their intelligence and obtain the supreme. This path has been propounded by me. If a person follows this, he obtains peace and my abode. The learned know this as the supreme brahman."'

Chapter 11(21)

‘The illustrious one said, “My path is that of bhakti, jnana and rituals I have spoken about. Those who are inferior forsake it and pursue the temporary goals of the senses and objects of desire. They become tied to samsara. Depending on a person’s state, there are steady practices that have been spoken of as being good. Deviation from these is bad. This is what has been determined about them. O unblemished one! Pure and impure, good and bad, auspicious and inauspicious, can coexist in the same object. [1202] These have been laid down so that the principles can be used to investigate the pursuit of dharma, everyday conduct and the sustenance of life. I have revealed these norms for those who have to uphold dharma. Beginning with Brahma and down to immobile objects, all embodied entities result from earth, water, fire, air and space, the five elements. All of them are united with the atman. Though they are equal, the Vedas give them different names and forms. O Uddhava! This is so that each can accomplish its own respective objective. O excellent one! For the sake of regulating karma, I have laid down good and bad for entities, depending on the place, the time and other aspects. There are places where there are no black antelopes. Devotion towards brahmanas is missing. Such places are inauspicious. Even if there are black antelopes, these are known as Souvira and Kikata. [1203] These desolate places are not clean. Depending on the task, the availability of objects, or because it is naturally that, a specific time period is said to be good. When there are impediments towards performing karma, that is said to be bad and one should not attempt karma then. The good or the bad of an object depends on which other object it is attached to, words, [1204] whether it has been cleaned, the passage of time and whether it is large or small. [1205] Depending on a person’s intelligence, prosperity, location and state, an impure object may be able to, or may not be able to, taint him. Grain, objects made out of wood, bones, thread, liquids, metals and hides can be purified, or not, through time, air, fire, water and earth, acting singly or jointly. When touched by an impure smell, a fragrant substance can remove that impure coating and make it regain its original nature. That substance is then considered to be a purifying agent. Bathing, donations, austerities and performing

purifying acts, depending on age and status, are means of purifying oneself. After first remembering me, a dvija must perform these acts of purification. A mantra is pure when it is chanted by someone who possesses proper knowledge. A karma is pure when it is offered to me. An act of dharma is pure when six things are considered. [1206] Anything contrary is adharma. Sometimes, something good may turn out to be bad. Sometimes, something the norms declare as bad may turn out to be good. These specific circumstances constrain the use of those principles to determine what is good and bad. For those who have already fallen down, the performance of a similar act is no longer a sin. Someone who is lying down on the ground cannot fall further down. In conjunction with one's natural conduct, something may turn out to be good. [1207] Whatever course of action one refrains from, one is freed from that. This is dharma for men. It leads to well-being and removes grief, delusion and fear. If a man thinks of the good qualities of objects, he becomes attached to them. Desire results from that attachment. Among men, this desire leads to conflict. Conflict leads to intolerable rage and ignorance follows. This ignorance swiftly pervades a man's intelligence. O virtuous one! Deprived of intelligence, a person is thought to be as empty as an animal. He thus deviates from what is good for him. He is like a person who has lost his consciousness or is dead. Absorbed in material objects, he does not know his atman or the supreme. His life is as futile as that of a tree. Though he breathes, he is no more than bellows. The fruits spoken about in the sacred texts do not bring benefit. They are only meant to entice attraction for the supreme. They have been spoken about with the intention of indicating the benefit, like making someone imbibe a bitter medicine. Because of birth, desire, attachment to life and attachment to relatives, the minds of mortals become attached and these act as constraints in their realizing their atmans. Ignorant people submit themselves and wander along a dangerous path, deviating from what is good for them. If a learned person has entered the darkness of ignorance, why should he again engage in those pursuits? Some who are inferior in intelligence are ignorant and do not understand the true intention [1208] and pursue the flowering fruits of the sacred texts. Those who actually know about the Vedas do not speak in that way.

Those driven by desire are miserly and greedy. Their intelligence is such that they regard the flowers as the fruit. Enticed by the fire and blinded by the smoke, they do not obtain their own destinations. O dear one! They do not know me, present in all hearts and in this universe. They are content with their own lives and what has been spoken about in the sacred texts. It is as if their eyes are covered by mist. Those who are attached to material objects do not understand my views, which have been implicitly stated. Thus, they are attracted to violent sacrifices, as if these have been encouraged. Taking pleasure in violence, because they desire their own happiness, these deceitful [1209] people offer the animals that have thus been obtained at sacrifices dedicated to gods, ancestors and the lords of bhutas. In their dreams, they sketch out a world that is unreal, though it is pleasant to hear about. Because of the hope and resolution in their hearts, like a merchant, they give up their riches. [1210] Those who are full of sattva, rajas and tamas worship gods and others, Indra being the foremost, who are full of sattva, rajas and tamas. They do not worship me.'Through sacrifices to the gods, we will enjoy ourselves in heaven. When that is over, we will again obtain large mansions and noble births in this world.' The minds of men are agitated through such flowery words. They are proud and extremely greedy and my accounts are not attractive to them. The Vedas are about three subjects —the brahman, the atman and rituals. [1211] The rishis speak about things indirectly and the indirect method also appeals to me. It is extremely difficult to understand about the brahman in words, since the vital air of speech, the sense of speaking and the perception of the mind are involved. The brahman has no limits. It is fathomless and is as deep as the ocean. I am the lord, infinite in powers. I am the brahman. I manifest myself before creatures in the form of sound and can only be perceived indirectly, like the subtle fibre in the stalk of a lotus. Through its mouth, the spider takes out strands of web from its heart. Like that, the vital air manifests itself from space as sound and touches the mind and assumes a form. The lord is full of metres, full of amrita and there are thousands of different sounds, classified as consonants, vowels, sibilants and semi-vowels. Omkara was thus embellished in different ways, expanding through colourful expressions. There

were chhandas, [1212] each containing four aksharas more than the previous one. The lord, infinite and limitless, creates this large expanse and again withdraws it into himself. The metres are gayatri, *ushnik, anushtup, brihati, pankti, trishtup, jagati, atichchhanda, atyasti, atijagati* and *virat*. [1213] What is prescribed? What is indicated? What is described? What is not recommended? What is the heart of the matter? Other than me, there is no one in the world who knows this. I am the one it has injunctions about worshipping. If there are injunctions about not worshipping me, that is also me. That is the meaning of all the Vedas. Resorting to speech, it differentiates me. Having differentiated because of maya, it negates me and is finally reduced to silence."'

Chapter 11(22)

'Uddhava asked, "O lord! O lord of the universe! How many principles have the rishis enumerated? We have heard from you that there are twenty-eight—nine, eleven, five and three. [1214] Some learned ones speak of twenty-six, others mention twenty-five. Some say seven, nine or six. Others say eleven. Some speak of seventeen, others speak of sixteen or thirteen. O one with a long life! With what intention have rishis sung about these differing numbers of principles? You should explain this to us."

'The illustrious one replied, "Since everything is present everywhere, it is reasonable that brahmanas should speak in this way. They are under the grasp of my maya. That being the case, whatever they say cannot be contradicted. 'What you have said is not true. Truth is what I have spoken.' Since my powers that urge them are insurmountable, they cite reasons and argue in this way. That is how those differences and alternatives arise when they speak about the subject. When control over the mind and the senses has been obtained, all debate subsides. O bull among men! The principles enter one another. Depending on what the speaker perceives, he categorizes them as cause and effect. All the principles are seen to be present in one principle. A principle exists within its cause and also within its effect. The princi-

ples are everywhere. Each of the disputant enumerates, depending on whether the effect is included in the cause, or whether the cause is included in the effect. He speaks as he has ascertained. We accept the reasoning and the conclusion. A man who has been covered with ignorance right from the beginning is unable to realize his own atman on his own. Therefore, there must be someone else who knows about the truth, so that he can impart knowledge to him. The slightest difference does not exist between Purusha and Ishvara. [1215] The perception about these being different is pointless and such knowledge arises because of Prakriti's gunas. Prakriti has an equilibrium of the gunas. The gunas are Prakriti's attributes, not those of the atman. Sattva, rajas and tamas are the cause of creation, preservation and destruction. The transformation of sattva is said to be jnana, the transformation of rajas is said to be karma and the transformation of tamas is said to be *ajnana*. Time is disequilibrium in the gunas, while nature is Sutra. The nine principles enumerated by me are Purusha, Prakriti, Mahat, ahamkara, space, wind, fire, water and earth. The powers of perception are hearing, touch, sight, smell and taste. O dear one! The organs of action are tongue, hands, genitals, anus and legs. The mind is used for both perception and action. The attributes of the senses that perceive are sound, what is touched, the seen, what is smelt and form. The functions of the senses of action are movement, expression, excretion [1216] and artisanship. In the beginning, at the time of creation, Prakriti assumes the form of both cause and effect. Through sattva and the other gunas, it assumes that state, while the unmanifest Purusha is only a witness. Because of the glance of Purusha, Mahat and the elements are agitated and thus obtain vigour. They are brought together by Prakriti's strength and create the cosmic egg. Those who say there are seven principles enumerate the five elements, space and the others, the jivatman and the atman. These are regarded as the basis for the evolution of the body, the senses and the breath of life. Those who speak of six principles include the five elements and the supreme Purusha as the sixth. Uniting with those, he created this universe and entered it. Some say there are only four principles, with fire, water and earth having evolved from the atman. [1217] Just as something that has been born takes a form, this universe has also

originated from these. There are some who enumerate seventeen principles —the five gross elements, the five senses, the five objects of the senses, the mind and the atman as the seventeenth. In that way, when sixteen principles are enumerated, the atman is also spoken of as the mind. When thirteen are mentioned, this includes the five elements, the five senses, the mind, the jivatman and the atman. Eleven includes the atman, the five gross elements and the five senses. Eight means Mahat, ahamkara, the mind and the five elements. When it is nine, Purusha is added to this list. In this way, the rishis differ in the number of principles they have enumerated. All of them are supported by reasoning and are true. Such embellishments are worthy of the learned."

'Uddhava said, "O Krishna! Prakriti and Purusha are different in characteristics. But because they depend on each other, no difference between them is seen. Prakriti can be discerned in the atman and the atman can be discerned in Prakriti. O lotus-eyed one! In this connection, there is a grave doubt in my mind. O one who knows everything! Using your polished words and reasoning, you should dispel this. It is from you that living beings obtain knowledge. It is your power that takes the knowledge away. Barring you, no one else can comprehend the progress of your maya."

'The illustrious one replied, "O bull among men! There is a difference between Purusha and Prakriti. [1218] This manifest creation results from the agitation in the gunas. O dear one! My maya creates many differences in the gunas. This leads to differences in intelligence and diversity in attributes. Creation has three kinds of transformations—adhyatmika, adhidaivika and adhibhoutika. The sense of sight is adhyatmika, the form of the sun is adhibhoutika and the part of the sun that enters through the aperture in the eye is adhidaivika. They interact with each other to show the sun, but the sun exists independently. In that way, the atman is the original cause and is separate from anything else. Through its own illumination, it illuminates other agents and they in turn illuminate everything else. This is the way touch, hearing, eyes, the tongue and the nose can also be analysed. [1219] When the gunas are agitated, with Pradhana as the basis, there is a transformation and ahamkara is generated. Created from Mahat, it is the source of delusion and

differentiation. There are three kinds of ahamkara—resulting from sattva, rajas and tamas. Lack of jnana leads to debates about the atman. 'This is real.' 'That is not real.' Such arguments are based on differentiation and are pointless. Men who have turned their intelligences away from me will not be able to give these up, though I exist within their own selves."

'Uddhava said, "O lord! The intelligences of those who deviate from you are diverted by the karma of what they have themselves done. They accept and give up superior and inferior bodies. O Govinda! Tell me about this. It is extremely difficult for those who are not intelligent to understand this. Since most people are deceived, learned people are rare in this world."

'The illustrious one replied, "The minds of men are full of karma. Along with the five senses, they travel from one body to another. Though distinct, the atman also follows. The mind thinks about material objects, those that have been seen, or those that have been heard of. It dissolves and subsequently rises again, bound by karma. But the former memory is lost. Because of attachment towards material objects, he no longer has any memory of his former self. For a living being, this kind of loss of memory, whatever be the reason, is known as death. O generous one! Birth is said to be nothing but the complete identification of a man with a new body. This kind of acceptance is like accepting the wishes in a dream. In the present state of dreaming, a person does not remember the former dreams. In that way, unable to see the past, he thinks that he has no past. The mind, where the senses rest, identifies with the three forms of the new body, [1220] which only appears as real. Just as a good father may give birth to a wicked son, a person thus becomes the cause of external and internal differences. [1221] O dear one! The force of time is powerful, but because it is subtle, its progress is not seen. As a result of time, beings are constantly created and destroyed. Flames in a fire change, as do flows in rivers. The fruits on a tree also change. In that way, changes are brought about in age and other aspects of all creatures. Since flames change, 'This is the same light of a lamp,' is an untrue statement. Since flows change, 'This is the same water in the river,' is an untrue statement. In that way, people who say, 'This is the same man,' are wasting their time and stating what is not true. A man is not born be-

cause of the seeds of his karma. Nor does he die because of that. Just as fire appears and is extinguished because of the presence or absence of kindling, death and immortality are the result of illusion. The nine stages of the body are conception, pregnancy, birth, infancy, childhood, youth, middle age, old age and death. Superior and inferior perceptions about the body arise because of false speculations in the mind. They are accepted as a consequence of being attached to the gunas. It is only rarely that a person discards them. From a father's death, one can infer about one's own death. From a son's birth, one can infer about one's own birth. If a person understands that creation and destruction are only related to the body, he is no longer subject to duality. A tree is born from a seed and is eventually destroyed. A person who knows this attribute about a tree's birth and death is a distinct witness. It is the same with the witness who is distinct from the body. An ordinary and ignorant man fails to distinguish his atman from the material body. Because he thinks contact with material objects is real, he returns to samsara. If he is dominated by sattva, he becomes a rishi or a god. If he is dominated by rajas, he is born as an asura or as a man. If he is dominated by tamas, he becomes a bhuta or inferior species. Thus, he is whirled around in karma. A person imitates those whom he sees acting or dancing. In that way, the atman does not act. But seeing the qualities of intelligence, it is made to follow. O Dasharha! Though they do not move, the reflections of trees in the water seem to move. When the eyes roll around, the earth is seen to be in a whirl. Mental perceptions and intelligence lead to false identifications with material objects. Like what is seen in a dream, the atman falsely identifies with samsara. Material objects do not really exist. However, like calamities that are experienced in a dream, samsara does not vanish for those who think about material objects. O Uddhava! Therefore, do not use the senses to enjoy material objects. See that this delusion is based on apparent differentiation and on an inability to grasp the nature of the atman. Even if abused, shown disrespect, defrauded, ridiculed, envied, chastised, bound, deprived of livelihood, defiled with spit, urine or excrement and troubled in many ways by those who are ignorant, a person who desires his own benefit uses his own atman to rise above these hardships."

‘Uddhava said, “O supreme among eloquent ones! Please tell us how we can understand this properly. O atman of the universe! I think that even the learned find it extremely difficult to tolerate the transgressions of the wicked. Nature is too powerful. The only exceptions are those who are serene because they are engaged in dharma by seeking shelter at your feet.”’

Chapter 11(23)

Badarayana’s son said, ‘The foremost among the Dasharhas was thus asked by Uddhava, the foremost among his devotees. Mukunda, whose valour is worth speaking about, praised his servant’s words and spoke to him.

‘The illustrious one said, “O Brihaspati’s disciple! When agitated by the abuse of wicked men, there is no virtuous person in this world who is capable of composing himself. A man is not tormented as much by arrows that pierce his inner organs as much as he is by the harsh words of the wicked that strike at his inner organs. O Uddhava! In this connection, there is an extremely sacred account. I will describe it to you. Control yourself and listen. A mendicant was abused by wicked people and he sung this. He regained his composure when he remembered that this was the consequence of his own karma. There was a brahmana in Avanti. He was among the most wealthy and prosperous. He earned a living through commerce. He was miserly, lascivious, avaricious and extremely prone to rage. He never honoured kin or guests, not even with words. His house was empty. [1222] At the right time, he did not even allow himself to enjoy objects of pleasure. He was so wicked in conduct and so miserly that his sons, relatives, wife, daughters and servants were disgusted with him and displayed no affection towards him. In this way, he was like a yaksha [1223] guarding riches and was deprived of both this world and the next. Deprived of dharma and kama, the five entitled to shares [1224] became angry with him. O generous one! Because of this neglect, his share of good deeds was exhausted. Indeed, all the wealth that he had accumulated with a great deal of effort was also lost. O

Uddhava! Some was taken away by kin, some by bandits. Some was lost because of destiny and some was taken away by brahma-bandhus, men and kings. He was deprived of his riches and he was devoid of dharma and kama. He was ignored by his own people. He was tormented by worries and those were impossible to overcome. He thought for a long time. Having lost his riches, he was tormented. He lamented and his voice choked with tears. A great sense of renunciation arose. 'Alas! What hardship! I have unnecessarily tormented myself. I did not strive for dharma or kama and the artha has also been lost. In general, the riches of misers never bring them happiness. It causes torments in this world and, after death, leads to hell. The pure fame of those who are famous and the praiseworthy qualities of those who are qualified are destroyed by even the slightest bit of greed, just as beauty is destroyed by a little bit of white leprosy. In earning wealth, achieving it, increasing it, protecting it and spending it, men go through a great deal of efforts, fare, anxiety and confusion. It is held that there are fifteen kinds of hardships experienced by men that are due to wealth—theft, violence, falsehood, duplicity, desire, anger, confusion, intoxication, dissension, enmity, lack of trust, rivalry, addiction to women, addiction to wine and addiction to gambling. Therefore, though it is spoken of as desirable, wealth is actually undesirable. If a person desires what is good for him, he should cast it far away. Brothers, wives, fathers and well-wishers who are loved become instant enemies because of a small coin. Birth as a human is desired by the immortals, that too as a foremost brahmana. Having obtained it, a person neglects it. He destroys his own benefit and obtains an inauspicious end. A man has obtained this world, which is the gate to both heaven and emancipation. Why should he become attached to something that is temporary, something that is the store of calamities? If a person does not distribute it among gods, rishis, beings, kin, relatives and others who have shares, he is protecting riches like a yaksha and will fall downwards. I have been distracted and my life and strength have been squandered in the futile pursuit of riches. An accomplished person can obtain success. What can an aged person like me do? Why should a learned person constantly suffer in the futile pursuit of wealth? Indeed, this entire world is completely con-

founded by someone's maya. When a person is about to be devoured by death, what will riches and those who bestow riches accomplish? What is the purpose of kama and those who can bestow kama? Such karma only leads to another birth. The illustrious Hari is in all the gods and he must certainly be satisfied with me. He has reduced me to this state, with non-attachment as a boat to carry me across. In whatever little bit of time I have left, I will cease to care about anything, or about my own beloved body. Without being distracted, I will devote myself entirely to my own benefit. I will find satisfaction within my own atman. May the gods and the lords of the three worlds approve of this. In the space of a muhurta, Khatvanga was able to reach Brahma's world.' [1225] The excellent brahmana from Avanti made up his mind in this way.

'"He loosened the bonds of his heart. He became a tranquil sage and mendicant. Controlling himself, his senses and his breath of life, he roamed around the earth. Without being attached to anything, he went to cities and villages for the sake of alms and entered unnoticed. O fortunate one! Seeing that aged and unclean beggar, wicked people showed him disrespect and abused him in many ways. Some took away the staff made of bamboo. Some took away his begging bowl. Some took away his kamandalu. Some took away his seat. Some took away his string of rudraksha beads. Some took away his torn rags. They would show them to the sage. Pretending to return them to him, they would take them away again. He would sit down on the bank of a river, to eat the food that he had begged. Wicked people would spit or urinate on his head. He had a vow of silence and they would try to make him speak. If he did not speak, they would strike him. If he did speak, others would chastise him. Some said, 'He is a thief.' Others said, 'He should be bound. Bind him with ropes.' Saying this, they bound him up. Some criticized and slighted him. 'Displaying the standard of dharma, this one is a fraud. His own relatives have thrown him out. Since his riches have been destroyed, he is using this to ensure a means of livelihood.' Some said, 'This one is great in substance. He is as steady as the king of the mountains. He is using silence to achieve his goal. He is as firm in determination as a crane.' Some ridiculed him. Some broke wind against him.

Some bound him. Some tied up the brahmana, like something to play with. There were hardships caused by nature, by destiny and by his own body. He tolerated all this, realizing that he was obtaining all this as a result of destiny. Thus insulted by the worst among men, who were trying to make him fall down, he sang a song. He was based in dharma. Based in sattva, he resorted to his fortitude.

‘“The brahmana said, ‘These men are not the cause of my happiness or unhappiness. Nor are the gods, my own body, the planets, karma, or time. It is said that the mind is alone the supreme cause. That is the reason one circles around in samsara. The powerful mind makes the gunas function and that leads to the different kinds of karma—white, black and red. [1226] The different species of life are created from this. The atman is not active. It is the mind which is active. My friend is golden in enlightenment [1227] and looks down from above. But I, as jivatman, have assumed its identity with the mind and am enjoying the objects of desire. Attached to the gunas, I have bound myself down. The goal of donations, one’s own dharma, niyama, yama, learning, karma and good vows is to control the mind. All of them have this characteristic. The supreme form of yoga is to immerse the mind in samadhi. When the mind is controlled and tranquil, what is the need for donations and other things? Tell me. When the mind is not controlled and is distracted, what purpose will donations and other things serve? When the mind is under control, all others, including the divinities, [1228] are under control. The mind is never under the control of anything else. The mind is a divinity who is stronger than the strongest. If a person can bring it under control, he is the god of all the divinities. The mind is an enemy impossible to vanquish. Some are tormented by it and are unable to conquer it. Therefore, they are confused and have futile conflicts with other mortals—enemies, but even friends and neutrals. The body is only a creation of the mind. With their intelligence blinded, humans identify themselves with it and have notions of “I” and “mine”. They suffer from the illusion, “I am this” and “He is someone else.” Hence, they wander around in a darkness that is impossible to cross. If people are the cause of my happiness and unhappiness, that has to do with the physical body. What does the at-

man have to do with this? If a person bites his tongue by chance, he has done this himself. Why should he be angry at someone else for the suffering? If divinities of the senses are responsible for the unhappiness, what does the atman have to do with this? That has to do with transformations. If one limb in his own body chooses to attack another limb, with whom will a man get angry? If the atman is the cause for happiness and unhappiness, then nothing else can be responsible. This is just a person's own nature. If there is anything other than the atman, it cannot be real. Why should one be angry? Happiness or unhappiness don't really exist. If the planets are the cause of happiness and unhappiness, what does it have to do with the atman? One doesn't have a birth, while the other is born. It is said that planets cause suffering to other planets. Whom should a man get angry with? The atman is distinct from both a body and a planet. If karma is the cause of happiness and unhappiness, what is the role for the atman there? The body of a man is not sentient, while it is the atman which is sentient. [1229] Whom will he be angry with? There is no foundation for the notion of karma. If time is the cause of happiness and unhappiness, what is the role of the atman there? Time is a manifestation of the atman. A flame does not burn its own spark. Ice does not destroy the quality of coldness. The supreme has no notion of duality. Whom will one be angry with? There is no agency anywhere, of any variety. The atman is supreme and beyond any attachment and duality. It is ahamkara which gives rise to samsara. A person who understands this has nothing to fear from anything that has been created. That being the case, I will faithfully base myself on the paramatman. That is what the maharshis spoke about earlier. I will cross this insurmountable darkness and serve at Mukunda's feet.'"

'The illustrious one continued, "With his wealth destroyed, he was disgusted. He overcame his despondency and, becoming a mendicant, roamed all over the earth. Though he was reviled by the wicked, he remained steadfast in his own dharma. The sage sang the following chant. 'Nothing other than a man's confusion gives rise to happiness and unhappiness. Friends, neutrals and enemies are the creations of the darkness of samsara.' O son! Therefore, in every possible way, use your intelligence to control your

mind. Immerse yourself in me. That is what yoga propounds. The mendicant's chant is about devotion to the brahman. If a person controls himself and meditates on it, makes others listen to it or hears it, he will never be overwhelmed by the opposite pair of sentiments."'

Chapter 11(24)

'The illustrious one said, "I will now speak to you about samkhya, the nature of which has been determined earlier. [1230] Realizing this, a man can instantly give up any confusion caused by a sense of differentiation. In the beginning, at the time of krita yuga and when there were no yugas, [1231] people were accomplished in discrimination and because of that knowledge, saw everything as one and without any differentiation. It was one and undifferentiated, beyond the reach of mind and speech. However, that great truth differentiated itself into two and became the fruits of maya and that reflected in this. [1232] Out of these two entities, one is Prakriti, with the two aspects of cause and effect. The entity that possesses jnana is spoken of as Purusha. Prakriti was agitated by my glances as Purusha and with my sanction, the gunas—sattva, rajas and tamas—were evolved. Sutra [1233] evolved from these and Mahat was created from Sutra. Together, Mahat and Sutra underwent transformations and ahamkara, which causes bewilderment, was evolved. This has three types—vaikarika, taijasa and tamasa. These have intelligent and non-intelligent forms and are the cause of the tanmatras, the senses and the mind. *Tamasa ahamkara* lead to the creation of the tanmatras and the gross elements. *Taijasa ahamkara* lead to the creation of the senses. [1234] The eleven divinities were created from vaikarika ahamkara. [1235] Urged by me, all these entities came together and worked collectively. The cosmic egg was created in this way, an excellent place for me to lie down on. That cosmic egg was floating around in the water and I manifested myself inside it. A lotus known as Vishva sprouted from my navel and the self-creating one [1236] appeared inside that. Through my favours, he was endowed with rajas and performed austerities for the sake of creating. Thus, the atman of

the universe created the worlds, the guardians of the worlds and the three—*bhur, bhuvar* and *svar*. Svar is the abode of the gods, bhuvar is the abode of the bhutas and bhur is the abode of mortals and others. The Siddhas reside beyond these three worlds. The lord created the regions that are below the earth for the asuras and the nagas. All the karma performed under the influence of the gunas leads to a destination in the three worlds. Through yoga, austerities and renunciation, a person obtains a destination in the unblemished worlds of *maharloka, janaloka, tapoloka* and *satyaloka*. A person who practises bhakti yoga finds a destination in me. I am the creator and, in my form as time, have linked this world to karma. In the flow of the gunas, one sometimes rises up and is sometimes submerged. All the manifestations that have been established, large or small, thin or stout, have been created by Purusha and Prakriti. Anything that exists at the beginning, the middle and the end of an entity, across all these transformations, is regarded as the real entity. This is the case with objects made out of gold or earth. [1237] But the subsequent product may have a cause which is the product of a transformation resulting from an earlier cause. That which exists at the beginning and the end of the chain is referred to as the real entity. Prakriti can be regarded as the primary cause, but the supreme Purusha is its foundation. Time manifests these and in this triad of what is real, I am established as the brahman. As long as my favourable glance remains, this progressive creation, from cause to subsequent effect, continues. For the sake of creation, this great flow of the gunas also continues. This universal form, in which creation and destruction of the worlds take place, is pervaded by me. I have devised the worlds and the means of their dissolution into the five elements. Mortals are withdrawn into food. [1238] Food is withdrawn into grain. Grain is withdrawn into the earth. The earth is withdrawn into its attribute of smell. Smell is withdrawn into water. Water is withdrawn into its attribute of taste. Taste is withdrawn into fire. Fire is withdrawn into its attribute of form. Form is withdrawn into wind. Wind is withdrawn into its attribute of touch. Touch is withdrawn into space. All the senses are withdrawn into their sources. These sources are then withdrawn into their controllers. The mind is withdrawn into the controller of the mind, vaikarika ahamkara. Sound is

withdrawn into tamasa ahamkara. All of ahamkara is withdrawn into Mahat. The powerful Mahat is withdrawn into the gunas that generated it. The gunas are withdrawn into the unmanifest Prakriti. Prakriti is withdrawn into time, which ceases to function. Time is withdrawn into jiva, full of maya. Jiva is withdrawn into atman, which caused it. The atman is only based on the atman and its existence can be inferred from the process of creation and destruction. When the sun rises, there is no longer any darkness in the sky. In that way, if a person examines this differentiation of the atman in his mind, all illusion is destroyed. This is known as the process of samkhya and it severs the bonds of doubt. The superior and the inferior, the process of creation and of destruction, can be clearly seen and I have spoken about this."'

Chapter 11(25)

'The illustrious one said, "O noble being! I will now tell you about a person being affected by the mixture of the gunas. Please understand. Control of the mind, control of the senses, forbearance, austerities, truthfulness, compassion, memory, contentment, renunciation, lack of desire, devotion, modesty, generosity and pleasure in one's own self—these are the effects of sattva. [1239] Desire, efforts, insolence, greed, pride, seeking benedictions for the sake of happiness, rashness resulting from intoxication, love of fame, laughing at others, valour, strength and enterprise—these are the effects of rajas. Anger, avarice, falsehood, violence, begging, hypocrisy, lassitude, dissension, sorrow, delusion, grief, despondency, sloth, hopes, fear and lack of enterprise—these are the effects of tamas. These, in that order, are the effects of sattva, rajas and tamas. I have generally described the effects of these attributes. Now hear about their combinations. The combination of these leads to the mindset of 'I' and 'mine'. Anything done by the mind, the organs of action, the organs of perception or the breath of life result from such combinations. If a person devotes himself to dharma, artha and kama and this leads to obtaining faith, satisfaction and wealth, this is nothing but

the combination of the gunas. [1240] If a person is characterized by devotion to pravritti and is a householder, when he pursues his own dharma, this is a manifestation of the combination of the gunas. [1241]

Chapter 11(26)

'The illustrious one said, "Having got this human body, if a person resorts to my dharma, he can obtain me, the bliss and the paramatman that exist in his own atman. Through faith and jnana, one can be freed from the state of being a jiva, created by the gunas. He can see that what can be seen by the eyes is not real. It is only maya, caused by the gunas. Such a person does not get entangled in unreal objects that are caused by the gunas, even though he exists amidst them. One must never be associated with those who are wicked, with those who seek to satisfy their penises and their stomachs. Like a blind person following another blind person, by following them, one falls into blinding darkness. Emperor Aila [1242] was extensive in fame. Separated from Urvashi, he was bewildered. He controlled his grief through non-attachment and chanted this song. While she was leaving him, the king lamented. Overwhelmed with grief, he was maddened. In that naked state, he rushed after her and said, 'O cruel wife! Remain.' He had passed several years with her, in the pursuit of this insignificant desire, not noticing the nights coming and going. He was unconscious because of his attraction towards her and was still not satisified.

'"'Aila said, 'Alas! My delusion is extensive. My mind has been contaminated by desire. When the queen clasped me by the neck, I did not notice that parts of my life had passed away. I was so deceived by her that I did not notice the sun rising or setting. Many days, amounting to many years, have certainly passed. Alas! I have brought this delusion on myself. Despite being an emperor and like a jewel on the crest of all the kings, I behaved like a domesticated deer in the hands of a woman. Though I am a lord, she cast me and my royal power aside, like a blade of grass. When the woman left, I followed her, like a mad man, naked and weeping. Despite my being

a lord, where is my power? Where is my energy? Like a donkey, she kicked me with her foot. As the woman left, I followed her. What will one do with learning, with austerities, with yoga and with learning? What will I do with solitude, or with silence? These are of no use to a person whose mind is stolen by a woman. Shame on me. I did not know what was good for me. Though I prided myself on being learned, I was a fool. Though I obtained lordship, like a bull or a donkey, I allowed myself to be conquered by a woman. I savoured the nectar of Urvashi's lips for many years. But like a fire fed with oblations, the desire in me was not satisfied. When the mind is stolen by a pumshchali, [1243] who other than the illustrious lord Adhokshaja can save a person? He is the lord of those who find bliss in the atman. Using the words of a *sukta*, the queen tried to make me come to my senses. However, I was evil-minded. The great delusion in my mind did not go away. I was unable to control myself. How has she caused me any harm? Since I had not conquered my sense, I did not know my own nature. Such was my mind that I saw a rope and took it to be a snake. What is this physical body? It is full of filth and bad smells. It is inauspicious. What are the good qualities a flower possesses? These are nothing but impositions caused by ignorance. Is the body the property of the parents, the wife, the master, the fire, dogs or vultures? [1244] Does it belong to the atman? Or does it belong to well-wishers? It is impossible to decide. One becomes attached to this abominable body which heads to an inferior destination. This is very handsome. There is an excellent one. The face is beautiful. These are the things one says about a woman's face. The body consists of skin, flesh, blood, nerves, fat, marrow, bones, urine, excrement and pus. What is the difference between those who find pleasure in it and worms? Therefore, a person who knows the true meaning should not get attached to women, or to those who associate with women. When the senses are attached to material objects, the mind is agitated. It cannot but be otherwise. If a thing is not heard about, or if it is not seen, no attachment towards it follows. If the prana is not engaged with something that is not present, the mind is calm and pacified. Therefore, one should not get attached to women, nor to those whose senses

pursue women. Even learned men do not trust the six categories. [1245] What need be said about a person like me?'"

'The illustrious one said, "Having sung in this way, the lord of the kings gave up Urvashi's world. He obtained me in his own atman. With this jnana, he cleansed himself of his delusion. Therefore, an intelligent person must avoid association with those who are wicked and associate with those who are virtuous. It is such sages who can sever the excessive attachment of the mind through what they say. Without expecting anything, sages immerse their minds in me. They are serene and impartial in outlook. They are without a sense of ownership and without ahamkara. They possess nothing and are not affected by the opposite pair of sentiments. O immensely fortunate one! Among those immensely fortunate ones, there is always conversation about me. Men who take part in these obtain benefit for themselves and are cleansed of sins. Those who respectfully hear, chant and approve of these, become faithful and devoted towards me. They obtain devotion towards me. If a virtuous person obtains devotion towards me, what else remains to be accomplished? My qualities are infinite. I am the brahman. I am the atman, the one who confers bliss. If a person approaches the illustrious, fire, cold, fear and darkness are dispelled. Serving the virtuous is like that. They are the supreme shelter for those who are rising and falling in the terrible ocean of samsara. The sages know about the brahman. They are serene. To those who are drowning in the water, they are like a firm boat. Just as food provides life to living beings, I am the refuge for those who are afflicted. For men who die, dharma represents riches. Like that, sages represent shelter for those who are scared of falling downwards. Sages bestow vision on the eyes, just as the rising sun confers external vision. [1246] Sages are divinities and relatives. Sages are my own atman. Thus, losing all desire for the world that belonged to Urvashi, Vaitasena [1247] became free of attachment. He roamed around on earth, finding happiness in his own atman."'

Chapter 11(27)

‘Uddhava asked, “O bull among the Satvatas! Tell me about the method of using *kriya yoga* to worship you. What is its form? How do those who are devoted to you use it to worship you? All the sages, Narada, the illustrious Vyasa and the preceptor who was the son of Angiras, [1248] have repeatedly said that this brings great benefit to men. It first emerged from your lotus mouth. The illustrious Aja spoke about it to his sons, Bhrigu being the foremost. The illustrious Bhava spoke about it to the goddess. [1249] This is approved of by all the varnas and ashramas. O one who grants honours! I think it brings the greatest benefit for women and shudras. O lotus-eyed one! This frees a person from the bonds of karma. You are attached to your devotees. O lord of all the lords of the universe! Tell me about this.”

‘The illustrious one replied, “O Uddhava! There is no end to *karmakanda*. [1250] It is without limits. Briefly, but progressively, I will describe it to you. There are three kinds of worship—following the Vedas, following the tantras, and mixed. Using whichever one a person prefers, he must follow the rituals and worship me. A man may become a dvija according to what is stated in his own sacred text. He must then worship me faithfully and devotedly. Hear about this from me. This dvija must worship me in the earth, [1251] in fire, in the sun, in water, or inside his own heart. He must be filled with devotion and then worship me, his preceptor, using various objects. He must be without any deception. He must first bathe, clean his teeth and purify his body. He must bathe himself by smearing himself with mud and other things. [1252] In the course of both kinds of bathing, he must chant mantras. He must perform sandhya and other rituals towards me that have been mentioned in the Vedas. Firm in his resolution, he must arrange for the worship, such that the subsequent tasks are purified. It is said that the image can be of eight types—stone, wood, metal, clay, [1253] painted, made out of sand, made out of jewels, or conceived in the mind. When the lord’s shrine is established, it can be of two types—mobile or immobile. O Uddhava! When the worshipped image is immovable, there is no need for *avahana* or *udvasa*. [1254] When the image is movable, the observance of these two rituals is optional. If the image is not made out of clay or is not

painted, it can be bathed. In other cases, it must be sprinkled with water. When I am worshipped in the form of an image, excellent objects must be used. However, a devotee who is not deceitful can worship me with whatever is available. As long as the sentiment is there, he can even worship me inside his heart. O Uddhava! When I am worshipped in the form of an image, I love bathing and ornamenting the most. If I am worshipped in the form of an altar, the tattvas must be spread out. [1255] If I am worshipped in the form of fire, oblations of ghee must be offered. If I am worshipped in the form of the sun, I love arghya the most. If I am worshipped in the form of water, water must be offered. I love whatever a devotee offers me faithfully, even if it is some water. However, even if a lot of offerings are given to me by a person who lacks in devotion, I am not satisfied. What need be said about fragrances, incense, flowers, lamps, food and other things? After purifying himself, the worshipper must gather all the offerings together. He will devise a seat for himself, with the blades of the darbha grass pointing eastwards. He will sit down, facing the east or the north. He can also worship by facing the image directly. He must perform nyasa on his body. He must perform nyasa on the image. Using his hands, he must clean the image. As is appropriate, he must then get ready by consecrating the vessel that contains auspicious objects and the vessel that contains water. He must use water from the vessel containing water to sprinkle the place where the deity is being worshipped, the objects of worship and his own self. He must then arrange for three other vessels to be filled with water, [1256] reciting respective mantras for the heart, the head and the tuft of hair on the head. After this, he must chant gayatri mantra. The body has now been purified by the air and the fire. My supreme and subtle form, the source of life, is located in its portion in the lotus in the heart and after chanting 'Oum', he must meditate on this. This is what Siddhas experience. Depending on the level of his perception, he contemplates his body to be pervaded by the atman. He thus worships me. Conceiving of the image being pervaded by me, he invokes me through the objects of worship and establishes me in the image. He then performs nyasa in the limbs and worships me. He mentally thinks of a seat for me, with dharma and the other nine powers in attendance. [1257]

A lotus with eight petals is spread on that seat and the lotus has a radiant whorl and filaments. For the sake of success in this world and in the next, he follows both the Vedas and the tantras and offers me padya, arghya and achamaniya. In due order, he must then worship Sudarshana, Panchajanya, the mace, the sword, the arrows, the bow, the plough, the club, Koustubha, the garland and the shrivatsa mark. He must worship Nanda, Sunanda, Garuda, Prachanda, Chanda, Mahabala, Bala, Kumuda and Kumudekshana. [1258] In their respective places, all facing the lord, with water and other objects, he must then worship Durga, Vinayaka, Vyasa, Vishvaksena, his preceptor and the gods. If he possesses the riches, he must chant mantras and every day, offer me water for bathing, fragrant with sandalwood, *ushira*, [1259] camphor, kunkuma and aloe. He must chant *svarnagharmanuvaka, mahapurusha vidya, purusha sukta* and hymns from the Sama Veda, *rajana* and the others. [1260] As is appropriate, my devotee must lovingly decorate me with garments, the sacred thread, ornaments, decorations for parts of the body, garlands, fragrances and unguents. The worshipper must offer me padya, achamaniya, fragrances, flowers, *akshata*, [1261] incense, lamps and other objects. If it is possible, he must arrange for candy made out of molasses, payasam, ghee, *shashkuli*, sweet cakes, dumplings, *samyava*, curds, *supa* and other *naivedya*. [1262] Every day, else on days of festivals, the image must be massaged with ointments and bathed, and offered a mirror and equipment to clean the teeth. Food and other objects must be offered, with singing and dancing. A sacrificial arena must be prepared, as is recommended, with a pit and an altar and a surrounding girdle. [1263] Using the hands, [1264] a fire must be invoked and kindled on all sides. Spreading a mat of kusha grass, all sides of the fire must be sprinkled with water and following the rituals, the kindling must be placed for the fire. The objects of worship must be placed and sprinkled with water. After sprinkling with water, he must think of me in the fire. My complexion is that of molten gold. I hold a conch shell, chakra, mace and lotus. My brilliant form possesses four arms. I am serene and my garments have a complexion like that of the filament of a lotus. I wear a dazzling diadem, bracelets, a girdle and excellent armlets. The shrivatsa mark is on my chest, with the radiant Koustubha and a gar-

land of wild flowers. Having meditated on me and worshipped me, he must soak the kindling with ghee and offer them into the fire. He must tender two offerings of ghee and then the other oblations that have been soaked with ghee. A learned person will offer oblations with chanting of the main mantra and then follow with the sixteen kinds of worship, ending each verse with an oblation. [1265] Beginning with Dharma, [1266] each deity is worshipped according to the appropriate mantra, ending with *agnaye svishtakrite svaha*. [1267] Having bowed down before me and worshipped me, he must tender offerings to the attendants. Using the main mantra, he meditates on the brahman, remembering that this is nothing but Narayana's atman. He must again offer me achamaniya and offer whatever is left to Vishvaksena. He must offer fragrant betel leaves to freshen the mouth. He must sing and chant loudly, also dancing and imitating my deeds. He must listen to my account and recite it, remaining in that state for a while. He must praise me with hymns, superior and inferior, from the Puranas and ordinary texts. 'O lord! May you show me your favours.' Saying this, he must prostrate himself before me, like a rod. He will place his head on my feet, clasping them with both his arms. 'O lord! I seek refuge with you. Save me. I am terrified of this ocean of samsara, with crocodiles in the form of death.' After this, he must lovingly place on his head the remnants of the worship, representing something given by me. If udvasa is meant to be performed, he must conceive of the light in the image as again merging into the light that is me. I can be worshipped in whatever form and whenever, as long as that worship is faithful. My atman exists in all beings and all atmans are in me. If a man follows the Vedas and the tantras and worships me through kriya yoga, from me, he obtains success in both the worlds and gets what he desires. He must firmly establish my worship by constructing temples and beautiful gardens of flowers. Or he can ensure this worship through pilgrimages and festivals. If a person gives land, markets, villages and cities, so that my worship is continuously ensured on general or special occasions, he obtains me, with my opulence. By constructing a temple to me, one obtains sovereignty over the three worlds. Through worship and other things, a person obtains Brahma's world. However, if one does all three, [1268] one obtains serenity in me.

If a person has no wishes and engages in bhakti yoga, he obtains me. If a person worships me through bhakti yoga, it is me that he obtains. If a person gives something to gods or brahmanas and then himself steals it back, he is subsequently born as a worm and survives on excrement for a hundred million years. After death, the agent, the assistant who helps the act and the person who approves of it have a share in the karma and proportionately reap the consequences."'

Chapter 11(28)

'The illustrious one said, "One should not praise or reprimand the nature or deeds of someone else, considering that the universe is formed out of Purusha and Prakriti, based on a single atman. If a person praises or reprimands the nature or deeds of someone else, he soon deviates from his own objective and becomes attached to something unreal. The senses are formed out of taijasa ahamkara. When a man is asleep, the consciousness is lost and the atman is in a shell. [1269] Overcome by maya, a man is like a person who is dead. It is the same for a person who finds reality in material objects. When this duality of material objects is unreal, what is good and what is bad? Anything that is spoken about with words, or anything that is thought of through the mind, is unreal. Shadows, echoes and illusions are unreal and lead to similar effects. But these conceptions are based on the body and give rise to fear, right up to the moment of death. The lord is the atman of the universe. He is the creator and the object of creation. He is the atman of the universe. He is the protector and the object of protection. The lord is the one who withdraws and he is the object of withdrawal. Therefore, no object other than the atman can be distinctly discerned. The three kinds of appearance [1270] in his atman are without foundation. Know that these are the outcome of the three kinds of gunas and are the result of maya. If a person understands what I have expounded, he becomes accomplished in jnana and vijnana. He does not criticize or praise. He roams around in the world like the sun. [1271] Through perception, inference, the sacred texts and realization

of the atman, one should know that since this world has a beginning and an end, it is unreal. Hence, one must roam around without attachment."

'Uddhava asked, "O lord! The atman is the seer. The body, which is not the atman, is what is seen. Samsara is experienced by neither the atman, nor the body. In that case, who experiences samsara? The atman is without decay. It is without gunas and is pure. It is self-luminous and is not covered by anything. It is like the fire, while the body is like kindling. Who experiences samsara in this world?" [1272]

'The illustrious one replied, 'Samsara is without meaning. But as long as the atman lacks discrimination, it is attracted to the senses and to prana. Till then, it has to experience the fruits. As long as one thinks about material objects, like experiencing disagreeable things in a dream, samsara, though it does not truly exist, is not withdrawn. If a person is asleep and has not woken up, he experiences many disagreeable things. On waking up, this can no longer confuse him. Grief, joy, fear, anger, avarice, confusion, desire and other things, as well as birth and death, are seen to be related to ahamkara, not to the atman. Because of the identification with the body, the senses, prana, the mind and ahamkara, the atman who is inside the body assumes the form of jiva, with gunas and karma. [1273] Strung in this great thread, he is chanted about in many ways. Under the control of time, he revolves around in samsara. This has no foundation and is perceived in many different forms —the mind, speech, prana, the body and karma. Using worship and the sharp sword of jnana to sever this, sages roam around on this earth, free from all desire. Jnana and discrimination result from the sacred texts, austerities, direct perception, instruction and inference. The absolute is time and the cause, existing at the beginning, the end and the middle of this creation. Everything made out of gold was gold before the object was fashioned out of its own self and continues to be gold afterwards. In the middle, in the process of manufacture, though described with different names, it continues to be gold. I am exactly like that. O dear one! This vijnana exists in three states. [1274] The three gunas manifest themselves as the senses, the gross elements and the agent, collectively and separately. What is manifested in the state of turiya is the truth. That which had no existence earlier, and

will have no existence in the future, has an existence in the middle only because of its name. [1275] It is my view that an entity which exists merely because someone else gives it an appellation does not really exist. Though this universe appears to be manifest, it does not really exist. This is a modification caused by rajas. The brahman is manifest in its own illumination. The senses, the objects of the senses, and the mind are but wonderful transformations brought about by the brahman. In this way, an accomplished person uses discrimination and refutation to clearly differentiate the brahman from something else. Thus, one severs any doubts about the nature of the atman. One desists from all objects of desire and is satisfied in one's own bliss. The atman is not the physical body. Nor is it the senses, the divinities of the senses, the breath of life, wind, water, fire, space, earth, mind, objects of the senses, ahamkara, or the equilibrium between the gunas. The senses are manifestations of the gunas. If a person has controlled himself and has properly ascertained me as the lord, why will such a virtuous person get agitated by these? Irrespective of whether the sun is covered by clouds or the clouds have dispersed, why should the sun be blamed? The sky is not affected by the qualities of the wind, the fire, the water and the earth. Nor is it affected by the coming and going of the seasons. In that way, the truth is not contaminated by the impurities of sattva, rajas and tamas. It is beyond ahamkara and is the supreme cause of samsara. Rajas contaminates the mind because of attachment to material objects. Therefore, until it has been eliminated through firm bhakti yoga towards me, all association with objects of the senses, devised by maya, must be avoided. A disease that has not been properly treated recurs again and repeatedly causes distress to men. In this way, a mind that has not been purified suffers from the contamination of karma and an imperfect yogi is tormented by all kinds of attachment. An imperfect yogi suffers from impediments caused by men, other creatures and those created by the gods. Based on the strength of former practices, [1276] he engages in yoga again and is not entangled in the path of karma. Urged by something else, [1277] till the time of death, a being undertakes karma and is acted upon. [1278] However, though a learned person remains in Prakriti's domain, he experiences his own happiness, having cast

aside all desires. Regardless of whether he is standing, seated, walking, lying down, urinating, eating food or doing anything else that is natural, his consciousness is based in his atman and he does not recognize the body. Even if a learned person sees the many objects of the senses, he uses his inference to think of them as unreal and as being other than the atman. He is like a person who has woken up, to see that what he has seen in a dream has vanished. O dear one! Earlier, because of ignorance, it was accepted that this body, wrought by the gunas and colourful with karma, was no different from the atman and was identical. However, with re-examination, that view no longer exists. The atman cannot be perceived. Nor can its existence be rejected. When the sun rises, it destroys darkness from the eyes of men. But the objects that are seen already existed. Thus, accomplished examination sees the truth in me and destroys the darkness that covers a person's intelligence. This is self-luminous. It is unborn. It is impossible to measure it. It is great in consciousness and can perceive everything. It is one, without a second. It is beyond the conception of words. It makes speech and the breath of life move. Any sense of duality about the absolute is the result of delusion. There is nothing other than the atman. There is no support other than one's own atman. There are some, proud of their learning, who hold that these names and forms, constituted by the five elements, are undeniable. However, this duality, based on debates about what is real, has no basis. If a yogi has not perfected himself in yoga, many kinds of things will rise up in the body and try to engage his attention. There is a recommended procedure whereby these disturbances can be repulsed. Some of these disturbances can be repulsed through the process of yoga, some through asana, some through *dharana*, [1279] some through austerities, some through mantras and some through herbs. Some can be countered by meditating on me, chanting my name and doing similar things. These inauspicious aspects can be gradually destroyed by following the lords of yoga. Some persevering people keep their body fit and maintain their youth by using different kinds of techniques. They engage in yoga for siddhis. However, those who are accomplished do not have any respect for these efforts and regard them as useless. Like the fruits of a tree, this body is destructible. If a person constantly en-

gages in yoga, his body will become fit, but an intelligent person will not attach any importance to this. He will give up this kind of yoga and immerse himself in me. A yogi who seeks refuge in me and observes the process of yoga is not obstructed by any impediments. He is without desire and experiences happiness within himself."'

Chapter 11(29)

'Uddhava said, "O Achyuta! If a person is not in control of his mind, I think that this yoga is extremely difficult to practise. Tell me about a method whereby a man can easily obtain success. O Pundarikaksha! Often, yogis who try to control their minds are unable to control their minds and become frustrated, fatigued and despondent. O lotus-eyed one! Therefore, hamsas happily resort to your feet, which are the source of bliss. O lord of the universe! However, proud people [1280] who use yoga and karma are confounded by your maya. O Achyuta! It is not surprising that you are a friend to all those who are your servants and seek refuge with you, with their atmans devoted to you. The lords of the worlds seek the refuge of your feet, with the edges of their shining diadems touching them. But you were affectionate towards animals. [1281] You are in all atmans. You are the beloved lord of all those who seek refuge with you. You are all the objectives. Knowing this, who can reject you? Who will forget you and worship other beings? What can not be obtained by us, those who serve the dust of your feet? O lord! Wise ones happily remember you for your generous deeds and are incapable of repaying their debt, even if they possess Brahma's lifespan. You exist inside and outside embodied beings, as a preceptor and as consciousness, [1282] to destroy everything that is inauspicious and to show them their objective."'

Shri-Shuka said, 'Uddhava's heart was extremely devoted to him. He spoke to the lord of the lords, who had used his own potencies to play with the universe and had assumed three forms, [1283] in this way and asked him. He [1284] addressed him with a charming smile that was full of love.

‘The illustrious one replied, “I will tell you about the extremely auspicious dharma of devotion to me. If a mortal person follows this faithfully, he defeats death, which is extremely difficult to vanquish. Remembering me, all tasks must be gradually undertaken for my sake. The mind and the intelligence must be immersed in me. There must be attraction towards the dharma of being devoted to me. Such a person must frequent sacred places that are frequented by virtuous people who are devoted to me. He must follow the conduct of gods, asuras and men who are devoted to me. Alone, or collectively, he must celebrate auspicious days, pilgrimages [1285] or great festivities that are dedicated to me, making arrangements for singing, dancing and other signs of opulence deserving of kings. He must see me inside and outside all beings, like the sky. With an unblemished heart, he must see me in his own atman. O immensely radiant one! Thus, thinking that all creatures are full of my presence, he must show them respect, establishing himself in pure jnana. If a person is impartial towards brahmanas, *pukkasa*s, [1286] thieves, those who are devoted to brahmanas, the sun, a spark of fire, a cruel person and a compassionate person, it is held that he is learned. If a man looks at all men and thinks that they are full of me, all feelings of rivalry, jealousy, censure and ahamkara are quickly dispelled. Ignoring the ridiculing laughs of one’s relatives, one should abandon the view that one should be ashamed of anything connected with the body. Like a staff, he must prostrate himself on the ground before a horse, a chandala, a cow or an ass. Until the sense of me being in all creatures has been generated, he must continue to worship me through all acts of speech, mind and body. Through knowledge that the brahman is everywhere and by realizing the atman, he is dispelled of doubts and can cease from everything else. It is my view that this process is the most appropriate, using acts of speech, mind and body to see me in all creatures. O Uddhava! This perfect dharma is devoid of gunas and has been established by me. It is not driven by wishes. Therefore, even if a beginning is made, the effort is not wasted. O excellent one! This supreme dharma of devotion towards me has been fashioned to free onself of the fruits of karma, which are futile efforts to free oneself of fear and other things. This is the most intelligent thing that an intelligent person can do.

This is the most learned thing that a learned person can do. Using a mortal body in this unreal world, one can obtain truth and immortality. I have told you about the entire collection of teachings about the brahman, in brief and in detail. Even the gods find this extremely difficult to comprehend. I have repeatedly spoken to you about this jnana, with clear reasoning. If a man knows this, his doubts are destroyed and he is freed. These are extremely well-articulated answers to your questions, given by me. They are about the eternal, supreme and mysterious brahman. If a person nurtures this, he obtains the brahman. If a person bestows all of this knowledge on my devotees, he is like one who gives the brahman and I give my atman to him. It is sacred and supremely auspicious. If a person recites this every day, he is purified and uses the lamp of knowledge to reveal me to others. If a man constantly listens to this, without being distracted, he develops supreme devotion towards me and is not bound by any karma that he undertakes. O friend! O Uddhava! Have you now understood the brahman? Have the delusion and sorrow that arose in your mind been dispelled? This knowledge must not be given to those who are insolent, heretics, deceitful, lacking in servitude, lacking in devotion or lacking in humility. This must be spoken about to pure and virtuous people, those who are devoid of such defects and those who are devoted to brahmanas and are loved by them, even if they happen to be shudras and women, as long as they possess devotion. Once a curious person comprehends this, there is nothing else left for him to know. When one has drunk the nectar of amrita, there is nothing else that remains to be drunk. O son! Men pursue the four kinds of objectives [1287] through jnana, karma, yoga, trade and the wielding of the staff. [1288] But through me, all these objectives exist in you. If a mortal person gives up all other tasks and devotes himself to me, I regard him as special. He is worthy of obtaining immortality and uniting himself with my potencies."'

Shri-Shuka said, 'He heard the words of Uttamashloka, which instructed him about the path of yoga. He joined his hands in salutation and his voice choked with love. Tears flowed from his eyes and he was incapable of saying anything. O king! His mind was awhirl with love. Using his fortitude, he steadied himself. Taking himself to be extremely respected, he joined his

hand in salutation. He bowed his head down and touched the lotus feet of the foremost one among the Yadus. He said, "I was submerged in the great confusion of darkness, but that has been driven away, since I sought shelter in your presence. O original one! O one without birth! If a person approaches the sun, how can he be scared of cold or darkness? You have been compassionate. In return, you have given me, your servant, the lamp of vijnana. What person, devoted to you, will give up your feet and seek shelter with someone else? My bonds of affection towards the Dasharhas, the Vrishnis, the Andhakas and the Satvatas were extremely firm. For the reason of expanding your creation, you are the one who extended these, using your own maya. However, using the weapon of knowledge about the atman, you are the one who has now cut them asunder. O great yogi! I bow down to you. I am seeking shelter with you. Instruct me. May my affection towards your lotus feet remain." The illustrious one replied, "O Uddhava! Commanded by me, go to my hermitage, known as Badari. Bathe in the waters of that tirtha, purified by touching my feet. [1289] Cleanse yourself of the remaining taints by seeing the Alakananda. O dear one! Use garments made out of bark. Eat wild fare. Without any desires, be happy. Tolerate the opposite pairs of sentiments that arise from material objects. Control your senses and be good in conduct. Be tranquil and in control of your intelligence. Be full of jnana and vijnana. Use your discrimination to think about what you have learnt from me. Let your speech and intelligence be immersed in me. Always observe the dharma of being devoted to me. Very soon, you will transcend the three [1290] and obtain me, the supreme one." Uddhava was addressed by the intelligent Hari in this way. At the time of departure, he circumambulated him, bending his head down and touching his feet, sprinkling them with his tears. His heart was melting, though he had transcended the opposite pairs of sentiments. He was bound to him in a love that was extremely difficult to give up and was suffering on account of the separation. He was afflicted and was incapable of tolerating the separation. With a great deal of difficulty, he placed his master's sandals on his head. As he left, he repeatedly bowed down again and again. Placing the infinite one in his heart, the one who was greatly devoted to the illustrious one went to

Vishala. [1291] He observed what the only friend of the universe had instructed him. Engaging in austerities, he obtained the destination with Hari. This jnana, the immortal ocean of bliss, was spoken about by the illustrious Krishna to his devotees. The lords of yoga serve his feet and if a person serves them faithfully, he is liberated from this world. I bow down before the one who is known as Krishna. He is the original one, a bull among men. He is the composer of the sacred texts and like a bee, he gathered the essence of the Vedas, the substance of jnana and vijnana, for destroying the fear of samsara among his large number of servants. This is like amrita churned from the ocean and they can drink it.'

Chapter 11(30)

The king asked, 'Uddhava, the great devotee of the illustrious one, left for the forest. What did the illustrious one, the creator of all beings, do in Dvaravati? The bull among the Yadava lineage saw that his own lineage would be destroyed because of the curse of the brahmanas. His body was loved by all eyes. How did he give that up? Once the eyes of women were fixed on his form, they were unable to withdraw their eyes. When his form entered the hearts of virtuous people through the ears, it no longer left. His beautiful words generated attraction, not to speak of the respect shown to them by wise people. In the battle, Jishnu saw that form astride the chariot and obtained equanimity.'

Shri-Shuka replied, 'Krishna saw many great and evil portents arise in the sky, on earth and in the space between them. He spoke to the Yadus who were seated in Sudharma. The illustrious one said, "O bulls among the Yadus! These are great and evil portents in Dvaravati. These are Yama's standards. We should not remain here, not even for an instant. Let the women, the old and children go to Shankhodvara. [1292] Let us go to Prabhasa, where the Sarasvati flows in a western direction. We must bathe there, purify ourselves, fast and control ourselves. We must bathe and worship the gods and offer them unguents and other objects. Let us receive the benedic-

tions of the immensely fortunate brahmanas and give them cows, land, gold, garments, elephants, horses, chariots and houses. This is the supremely auspicious rite for warding off impediments. For this world and for the next, gods, brahmanas and cattle must be worshipped." All the Yadu elders heard the words spoken by Madhu's slayer. They agreed. Having crossed the water on boats, they left for Prabhasa on chariots. There, as instructed by the illustrious one, the divinity of the Yadus, the Yadavas, with supreme devotion, performed all the auspicious rites that would ensure them benefit.

'Because of destiny, their judgement was confused. There, they had a great bout of drinking the liquor *maireya*. [1293] That liquor destroyed their reasoning. As a result of that great bout of drinking, those brave ones became insolent. Their minds turned arrogant. Confused because of Krishna's maya, a great conflict arose among them. On the shores of the ocean, intolerant because of their rage, they attacked each other with bows, swords, broad-headed arrows, clubs, bludgeons and javelins. Flags fluttered atop their chariots and elephants. They were astride donkeys, camels, bulls, buffaloes, mules and men. Extremely insolent, they struck each other, like elephants charging against each other in the forest. With enmity aroused, Pradyumna fought against Samba, Akrura against Bhoja, Aniruddha against Satyaki, Subhadra [1294] against Samgramjit, Sumitra against Suratha and Gada against Gada. [1295] It was an extremely terrible encounter. Others, Nishatha, Ulmuka, Sahasrajit, Shatajit and Bhanu being the most prominent, attacked each other, blind with intoxication. They were severely bewildered by Mukunda. Dasharhas, Vrishnis, Andhakas, Bhojas, Satvatas, Madhus, Arbudas, Mathuras, Shurasenas, Visarjanas, Kukuras and Kuntis forgot their friendly relations and fought against each other. Filled with folly, sons fought against fathers, brothers with brothers, nephews with maternal uncles, nephews with paternal uncles, maternal grandfathers with grandsons, paternal grandfathers with grandsons, friends with friends and well-wishers with well-wishers. Kin killed kin. The arrows were exhausted and their bows were shattered. When their weapons were exhausted, they grasped stalks of eraka grass in their hands. As soon as they held them in their fists, these turned into clubs that were as firm as the vajra. They at-

tacked their adversaries with these. When Krishna tried to restrain them, they attacked him too. O king! They were so bewildered that they thought Balabhadra was an adversary. Having made up their minds to kill them, they attacked them like assassins. O descendant of the Kuru lineage! At this, they [1296] also became angry. They moved around in the field of battle, holding the eraka grass, turned into clubs, in their hands. Their [1297] rage and rivalry was caused by the curse of the brahmanas and they were enveloped in Krishna's maya. Like a fire that starts in a forest of bamboo, they brought destruction on themselves.

'When all the members of his lineage had been destroyed, Keshava thought that the remaining burden of the earth had been removed. Rama went to the shores of the ocean. Using yoga, he immersed himself in Purusha. Uniting his atman with the atman, he left the world of humans. Devaki's illustrious son witnessed Rama's departure. He silently sat down under a pippala tree. He showed his radiant four-armed form, dazzling because of its own brilliance. Like a fire without smoke, this dispelled the darkness of the directions. He wore the shrivatsa mark. His complexion was dark blue, but his radiance was like that of molten gold. He was attired in silken garments and bore the auspicious signs. His lotus face had a charming smile and the locks of his hair were dark. His eyes were like lotuses and he wore brilliant earrings shaped like makaras. He was ornamented with a girdle, a sacred thread, crown, armlets, bangles, a necklace, anklets, his signs, Koustubha and a garland of wild flowers. The personified forms of his weapons were around him. He was seated with his left foot, as red as a lotus, placed on his right thigh.

'A hunter named Jara had fashioned an arrow from the remaining bit of the club. [1298] He arrived there on a hunt. Taking the foot to be a deer, he pierced it and saw the four-armed person. Having committed a sin, he was scared. He prostrated himself and touched the feet of the enemy of the asuras with his head. "O Madhusudana! I have committed this sin in my ignorance. O Uttamashloka! O unblemished one! You should pardon this sinner. O Vishnu! O lord! It is said that if men remember you, their ignorance is destroyed. I have committed a wicked act. O Vaikuntha! Therefore, quickly

slay this evil hunter who desired deer, so that he does not commit such transgressions against virtuous people again. Even those whose atmans are immersed in yoga, Virinchi, Rudra and the others, their offspring and the lords of speech do not comprehend your maya, since their vision is clouded. What can I say about those like us, born as inferior beings?" The illustrious one replied, "Do not be frightened. Get up. What you have done is my wish. With my permission, go to heaven, the destination obtained by those who are virtuous." The illustrious Krishna can assume any form at will. [1299] Thus addressed, he circumambulated him thrice and was conveyed to heaven in a vimana.

'Following Krishna's footprints, Daruka arrived there, searching for him, heading in the direction from which the wind bore the fragrance of tulasi. He saw his master seated at the foot of the ashvattha tree, surrounded by the personified and shining forms of his weapons. His heart overflowing with love, he leapt down from the chariot and fell at his feet. His eyes were full of tears. "O lord! Since I could not see your lotus feet, it was as if I had entered darkness, with my vision destroyed. I could not see the directions, nor could I find peace. I was like a person in the night, when there is no moon." O Indra among kings! As the charioteer was saying this, while he looked on, the chariot with Garuda on the standard, along with the horses and the standard, rose up into the sky. Vishnu's divine weapons followed it. The charioteer was surprised to see this and Janardana spoke to him. "O charioteer! Go to Dvaravati and tell the relatives about the mutual destruction of the kin, Samkarshana's departure and my state. You and your own relatives should no longer reside in Dvaraka. When I leave it, the city of the Yadus will be flooded by the ocean. Let everyone take their families. Take my parents. All of you leave for Indraprastha, protected by Arjuna. You are immersed in my dharma. You are fixed in jnana. Therefore, remain indifferent. Know that these things have been created by my maya. Therefore, find peace." Thus addressed, he circumambulated and bowed down repeatedly, placing his feet on his head. Distressed in his mind, he left for the city.'

Chapter 11(31)

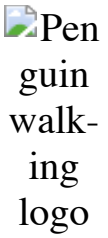
Shri-Shuka said, 'Brahma, Bhava, along with Bhavani, the gods, with the great Indra at the forefront, the sages and the lords of subjects arrived there. There were the ancestors, the Siddhas, the gandharvas, the vidyadharas, the giant serpents, the charanas, the yakshas, the rakshasas, the kinnaras, the apsaras and the brahmanas. They were extremely eager to witness the departure of the illustrious one. They chanted and sang about Shouri's birth and deeds. O king! Filled with great devotion, they were in a large number of vimanas that gathered in the sky. From these, they showered down a large number of flowers. The illustrious lord saw the grandfather and the others, who were manifestations of his own atman. He fixed his atman in his own atman and closed his lotus eyes. In transcendental meditation, he fixed himself in yoga. However, he did not use *agneyi* to burn down his auspicious body, which is a delight to the worlds. [1300] Instead, he entered his own abode. The drums of the gods were sounded. Flowers were showered down from the sky. Truth, dharma, fortitude, fame and prosperity left the earth and followed him. The gods, with Brahma at the forefront, returned to their own abodes. Since Krishna's movements could not be discerned, though they had watched, they were extremely surprised. In the sky, when a flash of lightning leaves the circle of the clouds, mortals cannot notice its movement. It was the same with Krishna and the gods. However, a few, Brahma, Rudra and some others, noticed Hari's movements of yoga. They were astounded and praised them. They left for their own respective worlds. O king! Know that his birth, disappearance and activities in this world were the result of his maya, since like an actor, he imitated the behaviour of embodied creatures. He creates this universe out of his atman and enters it. Having played with it, at the end, he withdraws it into the greatness of his atman. After this, he alone remains. As a mortal, he brought his preceptor's son back from Yama's world. When you were being scorched by the great weapon, he accorded you shelter. He conquered Isha, the one who is like death to the attendants of Death. He conveyed the hunter [1301] to heaven in his physical body. How could the lord not have protected himself? He is the only cause behind creation, preservation and destruction. He is the posses-

sor of infinite potencies. However, he no longer desired to maintain his body in this mortal world, after having demonstrated the ultimate state of welfare. If a person gets up in the morning, controls himself and chants devotedly about Krishna's supreme state, he obtains a position that is unmatched.

'Daruka reached Dvaraka. He felt down at the feet of Vasudeva and Ugrasena and drenched their feet with his tears, telling them about the separation from Krishna. O king! He told them about the complete destruction of the Vrishnis. Hearing this, the hearts of the people were anxious. Because of their sorrow, they lost their senses. They were distressed at being separated from Krishna. They beat their own faces and quickly rushed to the spot where their dead relatives were lying down. Devaki, Rohini and Vasudeva could not see their sons, Krishna and Rama. They were afflicted by grief and lost their senses. Tormented because of their separation from the illustrious one, they gave up their lives at the spot. O son! The women embraced their husbands and climbed on to their funeral pyres. Rama's wives embraced his body and entered the fire. Vasudeva's [1302] wives embraced his body. Hari's daughters-in-law did that for Pradyumna and the others. With their hearts fixed on him, Krishna's wives, Rukmini and the others, entered the fire. At being separated from his beloved friend, Krishna, Arjuna was afflicted by grief. He comforted himself with the excellent words that Krishna had sung. [1303] Arjuna ensured that the funeral rites were performed for the relatives whose gotras had been destroyed. [1304] According to age, he did this progressively for everyone who had been killed. O great king! Since Hari had left Dvaraka, the ocean immediately flooded it. It only spared the illustrious one's splendid residence. However, the illustrious Madhusudana is always present there. It is the most auspicious among all auspicious places and even remembering it, quickly destroys all sins. Dhananjaya collected the remaining women, children and aged people. He gathered them in Indraprastha and instated Vajra [1305] as the king there. O king! Learning about the death of their well-wisher from Arjuna, your grandfathers instated you as the successor of their lineage. [1306] All of them left on the great journey. Vishnu is the god of the gods. If a mortal person

faithfully hears about his birth and deeds and chants about them, he is freed from all sins. This is the beautiful account of the illustrious Hari's avatara, his valour and his childhood pastimes. They are stated here. It is extremely sacred. If a person hears them and chants them, he obtains great devotion and obtains the destination obtained by paramahamsas.'

This ends the Eleventh Skandha.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Twelfth Skandha

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Chapter 12(1)

The king asked, 'Krishna, the ornament of the Yadu lineage, returned to his own abode. O sage! Which lineage existed on earth? Please tell me this.'

Shri-Shuka said, 'The king named Puranjaya, [1307] the last king of the Brihadratha dynasty, will be born. His adviser, Shunaka, will kill his master and instate his son, known as Pradyota, as the king. [1308] Pradyota's son will be Palaka, Palaka's son will be Vishakhayupa and Vishakhayupa's son will be Rajaka. Rajaka's son will be Nandivardhana. These five kings from the Pradyota lineage will enjoy the earth for one hundred and thirty-eight years. Shishunaga will be born [1309] and his son will be Kakavarna. Kakavarna's son will be Kshemadharma and Kshemadharma's son will be Kshetrajna.

His son will be Vidhisara and Vidhisara's son will be Ajatashatru. Ajatashatru's son will be Darbhaka and it is said that Darbhaka's son will be Ajaya. Ajaya's son will be Nandivardhana and Nandivardhana's son will be Mahanandi. O best among the Kuru lineage! In kali yuga, the ten kings of the Shishunaga dynasty will enjoy the earth for three hundred and sixty years. O king! Mahanandi's powerful son will be born from the womb of a shudra woman. He will be one named Nanda and he will be the lord of a great amount of treasure. [1310] He will be the destroyer of kshatriyas. Thus, the kings will generally be like shudras and will be the followers of adharma. Mahapadma will be the solitary emperor of the earth and no one will transgress his commands. He will be like a second Bhargava. [1311] He will have eight sons, Sumalya being the chief. These kings will enjoy the earth for one hundred years. A brahmana, whom the nine Nandas will trust, will uproot them. [1312] In their absence, during kali yuga, the Mouryas will enjoy the world. The brahmana will instate Chandragupta in the kingdom. Chandragupta's son will be Varisara and Varisara's son will be Ashokavardhana. Ashokavardhana's son will be Suyasha and Suyasha's son will be Sangata. Sangata's son will be Shalishuka and Shalishuka's son will be Somasharma. Somasharma's son will be Shatadhanva and Shatadhanva's son will be Brihadratha. O extender of the Kuru lineage! During kali yuga, the ten kings of the Mourya dynasty will enjoy the earth for more than one hundred and thirty-seven years. O extender of the Kuru lineage! Thereafter, there will be Agnimitra and Agnimitra's son will be Sujyeshtha. [1313] Sujyeshtha's son will be Vasumitra, Vasumitra's son will be Bhadraka and Bhadraka's son will be Pulinda. Pulinda's son will be Ghosha and Ghosha's son will be Vajramitra. Thereafter, there will be Bhagavata and Bhagavata's son will be Devabhuti. The ten kings of the Shunga dynasty will enjoy the earth for more than one hundred years. O king! After this, the Kanva dynasty will rule over the earth and it will possess limited qualities. The Shunga Devabhuti will be addicted to desire. His adviser, the immensely intelligent Vasudeva from the Kanva lineage, will kill him and rule over the kingdom himself. Vasudeva's son will be Bhumitra and Bhumitra's son will be Narayana. During kali yuga, the kings of the Kanva dynasty will enjoy the

earth for three hundred and forty-five years. The last Kanva, Susharma, will be killed by his servant, the *vrishala* [1314] Bali of the Andhra race. [1315] This wretched one will enjoy the earth for some time. His brother, Krishna, will be the lord of the earth. Krishna's son will be Shrishantakarna and Shrishantakarna's son will be Pournamasu. Pournamasu's son will be Lambodara and Lambodara's son will be King Chibilaka. Chibilaka's son will be Meghasvati and Meghasvati's son will be Atamana. His son will be Anishtakarma and Anishtakarma's son will be Haleya. Haleya's son will be Talaka. Talaka's son will be Purishabhiru and Purishabhiru's son will be King Sunandana. Sunandana's son will be Chakora and his sons will be the Bahus, Shivasvati, the scorcher of enemies, being one of them. Shivasvati's son will be Gomati and Gomati's son will be Puriman. After this, there will be Medhashira and Shivaskanda. Shivaskanda's son will be Yajnashri. Yajnashri's son will be Vijaya. Thereafter, there will be Chandravijna and Lomadhi. O descendant of the Kuru lineage! These thirty kings [1316] will enjoy the earth for four hundred and fifty-six years. After this, seven Abhira kings and ten Gardhabhi kings will rule from Avabhriti. There will be sixteen kings from the Kanka lineage and they will be exceedingly greedy. Thereafter, there will be eight Yavanas, fourteen Turushkas, ten Gurundas and eleven Mounas. These [1317] will enjoy the earth for one thousand and ninety-nine years. The eleven Mounas will enjoy the earth for three hundred years. O dear one! After this, from Kilkila, the kings Bhutananda, Vangiri, Shishunandi, his brother Yashonandi, Pravirika and others will rule for more than one hundred and six years. They will be followed by their thirteen sons, the Bahlikas. Pushpamitra will be the king and his son, Dumitra. At the same time, these kings will rule over parts of the earth— seven Andhras, seven Kosalas, the kings of Vidura and the Nishadhas. There will be a king named Vishvasphurji in Magadha, also known as Puranjaya. He will reduce all varnas to the status of Pulindas, Yadus and Madrakas. The evil-minded king will turn most subjects against brahmanas. [1318] The valiant one will exterminate kshatriyas. From his city of Padmavati, he will protect and rule over the earth, from Gangadvara [1319] to Prayaga. The brahmanas in Sourashtra, Avanti, Abhira, Shura, Arbuda and Malava will become *vratya*s [1320] and the

kings will generally be like shudras. Shudras, vratyas and others, mlechchhas and brahmanas bereft of radiance will rule along the banks of the Sindhu and the Chandrabhaga, in Kounti and the region of Kashmira. O king! At the same time, there will be kings who will be just like mlechchhas. They will be devoted to adharma and falsehood. They will be limited in generosity, fierce and prone to anger. They will kill women, children, cows and brahmanas. They will seize the wives and wealth of others. They will be subject to sudden rises and sudden downfalls. Their spirits and lifespan will be limited. They will not be refined and will be devoid of rituals. They will be enveloped by rajas and tamas. In the disguise of kings, they will be mlechchhas who will devour their subjects. With these as kings, the citizens of those countries will imitate their conduct, behaviour and speech. They will oppress each other and will be oppressed by their kings. In this way, they will face hardships and destruction.'

Chapter 12(2)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O king! Thereafter, because of the force of time, day after day, dharma, truth, purity, forgiveness, compassion, lifespan, strength and memory will decay. In kali yuga, wealth will connote nobility of birth, good conduct and all the qualities for men. The determinant of dharma and rule of law will be strength. The reason for a couple to live together will be mutual liking alone. Deceit will be the foundation of business. Masculinity and femininity will be decided on the basis of sexual dexterity. The test of being a brahmana will only be the sacred thread. External signs will be the only indications of following an ashrama and that will be the basis for mutual exchanges. For those without a means of subsistence, the delivery of justice will be weak. Garrulity in speech will be an indicator of learning. A person without wealth will be regarded as one without virtue. Insolence will become an indicator of virtue. Mutual consent will be sufficient for marriage. Adornments will become a substitute for bathing. A distant place with water will be regarded as a tirtha. Long hair will become a sign of

beauty. The filling of the stomach will be the only selfish pursuit. Audacity will become a substitute for veracity. A person who can maintain his family will be regarded as accomplished. Dharma will only be followed for the purpose of establishing one's fame. The surface of the earth will thus be filled with wicked subjects. The strongest among brahmanas, kshatriyas, vaishyas and shudras will become the king. The subjects will be deprived of their wives and wealth by avaricious and merciless kings who will be like bandits who follow adharma. They will flee to mountains and forests and survive on leaves, roots, meat, wild honey, fruits, flowers and seeds. They will be devastated by drought and famine, suffering from taxes. Suffering from cold, wind, heat, rain, ice, hunger, thirst and tormented by thoughts, subjects will quarrel with each other. In kali yuga, the human lifespan will be fifty years. Because of the sins of kali, the bodies of embodied beings will become emaciated. The dharma of varnas and ashramas will become lost and men will deviate from the path of the Vedas. In the name of dharma, there will be many heretics. The kings will generally be like bandits. Men will earn many kinds of living through theft, falsehood and pointless violence. All the varnas will be like shudras. The cows will be like goats. All the ashramas will be reduced to garhasthya. Relatives will mean those connected through marriage. Medicinal herbs will generally be reduced in size. Trees will become as small as *shami* trees. Clouds will only yield lightning. The houses will generally be empty.

'Vishnu is the lord and preceptor of all mobile and immobile objects. He is the atman of everything. He takes birth for the protection of dharma and the virtuous and for the cessation of karma. In the house of the great-souled and foremost brahmana, Vishnuyasha, in the village of Shambhala, Kalki will manifest himself. The lord of the universe will mount his swift steed, Devadatta. He will possess the eight potencies and the eight qualities. [1321] The immensely radiant one will quickly travel around the earth on his horse, wielding his sword and chastising the wicked. He will slaughter crores of bandits who have disguised themselves as kings. After all the bandits have been killed, the inhabitants of the cities and the countryside will have their minds purified, as the extremely sacred fragrance from the deco-

rations on Vasudeva's body is borne along by the wind and touches them. When the illustrious Vasudeva is based in their hearts in the form of sattva, an abundance of subjects will be created. When the illustrious Hari descends as Kalki, the lord of dharma, there will be krita yuga and the offspring who are born will be inclined towards sattva. Krita yuga will commence when Chandra, Surya and Brihaspati are simultaneously in the nakshatra Tishya. [1322] The kings of the past and the future, belonging to the solar and the lunar dynasties, have been briefly mentioned to you. One thousand one hundred and fifteen years will elapse between your birth and the coronation of Nanda.

'Among the saptarshis, two are first seen to rise in the eastern sky. [1323] If a straight line is drawn between them, in the night, a nakshatra is seen at the midpoint. Those two rishis will be associated with that nakshatra for one hundred human years. Right now, at the present time, those two brahmanas are in Magha nakshatra. The illustrious Vishnu, as radiant as the sun and known by the name of Krishna, went to heaven. At that time, Kali entered the world and people started to take delight in evil. As long as the lotus feet of Rama's consort touched the earth, Kali was incapable of overcoming her. When the saptarshis enter Magha nakshatra, Kali will commence and will last for twelve hundred years. [1324] When these great rishis proceed from Magha to Purvashadha, starting with Nanda's dynasty, Kali will become more powerful. Those who know about the ancient accounts state that kali yuga commenced on the precise day and the exact time that Krishna left for heaven. When the fourth yuga of one thousand divine years is over, krita yuga will commence again. [1325] At that time, the minds of men will reveal the atman. I have thus enumerated Manu's lineage on earth. In the same way, from one yuga to another yuga, brahmanas, vaishyas and shudras can also be understood. The names are the only means of remembering these great-souled ones. Only some parts of their accounts remain, but their deeds are established on earth. Shantanu's brother, Devapi, and Maru are descended from the Ikshvaku lineage. They are powerful and great yogis and reside in the village of Kalapa. At the end of kali yuga, they will be instructed by Vasudeva and will re-establish the dharma of varnas and ashramas, just as it

had existed earlier. Beings on earth progressively exist in accordance with the four yugas—krita, treta, dvapara and kali. O king! The kings that I have spoken about, and others, will claim ownership over the earth. But at the end, they will be killed and depart, giving this up. Even if a person is known as a king, it will be known as worms, excrement or ashes. One is selfish for the sake of this physical body. Does one not know that one is going to hell? "This unrestricted earth was earlier ruled over by my forefathers. [1326] It now belongs to me and will subsequently belong to my son and my grandson, those from my lineage." The ignorant accept the view that their physical bodies, made out of heat, water and food, is "mine" and think of the earth as "mine". However, at the end, they must give up both and disappear from sight. O king! There were kings who used their energy to enjoy the earth. However, because of time, all of them have only become accounts that are spoken about.'

Chapter 12(3)

Shri-Shuka said, 'Seeing that the kings were eager to conquer her, the earth laughed. "These kings are puppets before Death, but they wish to conquer me. Despite being learned, because of their desire, these Indras among men fail. The kings have a lot of trust in their own physical bodies, but are like bubbles in foam. 'I will first vanquish the six. [1327] I will then conquer the royal ministers, the advisers, the citizens, relatives, the elephant keepers [1328] and other thorns. In this way, I will gradually conquer the earth, right up to the girdle of the ocean.' With such hopes in their hearts, they do not perceive that Death is near. After conquering me, bounded by the ocean, they use their energy to enter the ocean. Where is their victory over their own selves? Victory over one's own self is for the fruit of emancipation." O extender of the Kuru lineage! "In the past, humans and their sons have left, just as they had come. [1329] The ignorant ones fight in an attempt to conquer me. For my sake, fathers and sons fight and so do brothers. There is a sense of ownership in the unreal kingdom and their minds are attached to this.

Those foolish ones say, 'This entire earth belongs to me.' For my sake, the kings rival each other. They kill and are killed. There were Prithu, Pururava, Gadhi, Nahusha, Bharata, Arjuna, [1330] Mandhata, Sagara, Rama, Khatvanga, Dhundhumara, Raghu, Trinabindu, Yayati, Sharyati, Shantanu, Gaya, Bhagiratha, Kuvalayashva, Kakutstha, Naishadha, [1331] Nriga, Hiranyakashipu, Vritra, Ravana, the one who made the worlds scream, Namuchi, Shambara, Bhouma, [1332] Hiranyaksha, Taraka, many other daityas and great lords among kings. All of them possessed knowledge. All of them were brave. All of them conquered everything and were unvanquished. They followed the dharma of mortals. However, because of a sense of ownership, they tried to excessively possess me." O king! They were unsuccessful in their objectives. Due to the progress of time, they have only remained as accounts. O lord! I have spoken to you about these great ones. Their fame was spread throughout the world, but they have departed. I have spoken to you about them with a desire to impart vijnana and *vairagya* to you. These words represent the power of the supreme objective. A person who desires unblemished devotion to Krishna should always hear Uttamashloka's qualities being chanted and sung. They destroy everything that is inauspicious.'

The king asked, 'O illustrious one! How can people who live in kali yuga destroy the accumulated contamination of kali yuga? [1333] Tell me about the yugas and the dharma of the yugas. What are the dimensions of creation and destruction? What is the nature of time? What is the progress and form of the great-souled Vishnu?'

Shri-Shuka continued, 'O king! In the beginning, during krita yuga, dharma is nurtured by people and possesses its four legs. The four legs of truth, compassion, austerities and donations represent its power. The people are generally satisfied, compassionate, friendly, serene, self-controlled, tolerant, impartial in attitude and enterprising and find happiness in their atmans. During treta, a fourth part of each of the legs of dharma is gradually destroyed by each of the four legs of adharma—falsehood, violence, discontentment and dissension. O king! The people are devoted to rituals and austerities. They are not exceedingly violent or lascivious. They pursue three objectives [1334] and obtain prosperity through the three. [1335] Among varnas,

brahmanas are regarded as superior. During dvapara, austerities, truth, compassion and donations are reduced by half. This happens because of the attributes of adharma—violence, discontentment, falsehood and hatred. People are great in conduct, but strive for fame. They are devoted to studying and teaching. They are happy and possess large families. Among varnas, brahmanas and kshatriyas are regarded as superior. Because of increase of adharma, during kali, each of dharma's feet is reduced by one-fourth and only one-fourth remains. Towards the end, whatever remains will also be diminished and eventually destroyed. Subjects are avaricious, wicked in conduct, cruel and quarrel without any reason. They are unfortunate and preoccupied with many kinds of desires. Shudras and *dasa*s [1336] are regarded as superior. The gunas of sattva, rajas and tamas are seen among men. Urged by time, their influence over a person varies. When the mind, intelligence and senses are under the influence of sattva, that should be known as a sign of krita yuga. Knowledge and austerities bring pleasure. O intelligent one! When the conduct of embodied beings is based on karma, desire and liking for fame, know that under the influence of rajas, this is treta. When one desires to undertake tasks because of greed, discontentment, pride, insolence and jealousy, that is dvapara, under the influence of rajas and tamas. When there is maya, falsehood, lassitude, sleep, violence, depression, sorrow, delusion, fear and misery, this is said to be kali, under the influence of tamas. Therefore, mortals become short-sighted, unfortunate, given to eating, addicted to desire and devoid of riches. The women are unchaste and svairinis. The countryside is infested with bandits. The Vedas are polluted by heretics. The kings devour subjects. Brahmanas love their penises and their stomachs. Brahmacharis do not observe their vows and are unclean. Householders become beggars. Ascetics reside in villages. Sannyasis become greedy for wealth. The women are short in stature, but eat a lot. They lose their shame and have a lot of offspring. They are always harsh in speech. They are thieves, deceitful and full of excessive rashness. Inferior people become traders. Merchants are fraudulent. Even when there is no calamity, people consider it virtuous to earn a living from condemned pursuits. Even if a master is excellent in every possible way, when he is with-

out wealth, servants abandon him. Masters abandon distressed servants who have worked for the family for a long time and cows that no longer yield milk. Because of friendships based on sex, people abandon fathers, brothers, well-wishers and kin. Consulting sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law, [1337] people are wretched. During kali, men are attached to women. Shudras accept donations and earn a living in the disguise of ascetics. Those who know about adharma speak about dharma and ascend the best of seats. Minds are always agitated, suffering from famines and taxes. O king! No food can be found on the surface of the earth. People suffer from drought and fear. They are devoid of garments, food, drink, beds, sexual satisfaction, bathing and ornaments. During kali, people are like pishachas. During kali, people abandon and fight with their friends even for a few measly coins. [1338] For this, they will even kill their own relatives, or give up their own beloved lives. Men do not protect their aged parents, sons or wives. Even if they are born in noble lineages, they are inferior and only interested in satisfying the penis and the stomach. O king! During kali, people generally do not worship the illustrious Achyuta, the supreme preceptor of the universe, whose lotus feet are worshipped by the guardians of the three worlds. Instead, with their intelligence perverted, they offer sacrifices to heretics. During kali, a man will not chant his name or worship him even when he is dying, distressed, falling down, faltering or helpless, though this frees him from the fetters of karma and secures a supreme destination for him. Because of kali, men, objects, regions and innate nature are contaminated. However, if the mind is immersed in the illustrious Purushottama, all this can be dispelled. The illustrious one is in the heart. If a man hears about him, chants about him, meditates on him, worships him, or even shows him respect, everything inauspicious that has been accumulated over tens of thousands of births, is destroyed. This is like fire destroying impurities resulting from other metals which are inside gold, robbing it of its lustre. In that way, Vishnu is in the atman of yogis and swiftly destroys everything inauspicious. Learning, austerities, control of prana, friendliness, bathing in tirthas, vows, donations and meditation do not grant as much purification of the inner atman as does the illustrious Ananta who is inside the heart. O

king! Therefore, with all your soul, concentrate and place Keshava in your heart. Thus, even at the time of death, you will obtain the supreme destination. O dear one! He is in all atmans and is the refuge for everyone. Those who are about to die must meditate on the supreme and illustrious lord and he will lead them to his own atman. O king! There is an ocean of taints in kali, but there is one great quality. Even if one chants Krishna's name, one is freed from attachment and goes to the supreme destination. What is achieved in krita by meditating on Vishnu, what is achieved in treta by performing sacrifices and what is achieved in dvapara through serving him, can be obtained in kali by chanting Hari's name.'

Chapter 12(4)

Shri-Shuka said, 'O king! The measurement of time, beginning with paramanu and ending with twice a parardha have been described to you and so has the measurement of yugas. Now hear about kalpa and *laya*. One thousand cycles of the four yugas is said to constitute Brahma's day. O lord of the earth! This is kalpa, within which, there are fourteen Manus. After this, there is Brahma's night, which is said to be of the same duration. This is *pralaya*. [1339] At the end of the kalpa, these three worlds are destroyed. This is said to be *naimittika pralaya*. During this, the creator of the universe lies down on Ananta, [1340] withdrawing the universe and the self-created one [1341] into his atman. When the two parardhas are over, the seven elements of Prakriti [1342] and Parameshthi Brahma are destroyed. This has been thought of as *prakritika pralaya*. [1343] O king! When there is prakritika pralaya, the cosmic egg also faces destruction, since the primordial matter that has led to its creation is destroyed. O king! Parjanya does not shower down on the earth for one hundred years. There is lack of food. Subjects suffer from hunger and devour each other. Thus, afflicted by time, they gradually head towards destruction. The samvartaka [1344] sun's rays are fierce and drink up all the water in the ocean and the moisture in the earth and within embodied beings, releasing nothing in return. [1345] The samvartaka fire arises from

Samkarshana's mouth. Aided by the force of the wind, it burns down the worlds and the intervening space, which have already been emptied. The flames of the fire and the sun scorch from every direction, above and below. The cosmic egg is burnt like a ball of cow dung. A terrible storm rages for more than one hundred years. This samvartaka storm envelopes the sky in smoke and dust. O dear one! After this, many masses of clouds gather and they are multicoloured. They thunder with a terrible roar and shower down for one hundred years. The universe, inside the shell of the cosmic egg, becomes a single deluge of water. The flood of water takes away the quality of smell from the earth. [1346] When the quality of smell has been taken away, the earth ceases to exist. The fire takes away the quality of taste from water. Without the quality of taste, water ceases to exist. The wind takes away the quality of form from fire. Without the quality of form, fire ceases to exist. Space takes away the quality of touch from the wind. O king! Without the quality of touch, the wind ceases to exist and merges into space. Tamasika ahamkara takes away the quality of sound from space and space ceases to exist. O dear one! Taijasa ahamkara absorbs the senses and vaikarika ahamkara absorbs the divinities who preside over the senses. Mahat absorbs ahamkara and sattva and the other gunas absorb Mahat. O king! Thereafter, urged by time, the unmanifest Prakriti absorbs the gunas. Pradhana has no form. It is not subject to the modifications of time and does not have any attributes. It is without beginning and without end. It is not manifest and is eternal. It is without decay and is the cause behind everything. There is no speech and no mind. Sattva, rajas, tamas and Mahat and the others do not exist. Prana, intelligence, the senses and their presiding deities do not exist. Indeed, there is no structure there that can be called the world. There is no state of remaining awake, sleeping or in sushupti. The sky, space, water, earth, fire and the sun do not exist. The emptiness is somewhat similar to the state of sushupti. But it is a state that cannot be thought about. It is said that this state is the root cause behind creation. Urged by time, the potencies of Purusha and Prakriti are disabled and merge into each other. This is said to be prakritika pralaya. Jnana is manifest as the only form of intelligence, the senses and the objects of the senses. Anything with a beginning and an

end no longer has any meaning, since whatever is perceived can no longer be distinguished from its cause. Light, the eye that sees the light and the form of the light are not different from the original element of fire. In that way, intelligence, the senses and the objects of the senses are not distinct from the brahman, which however is distinct from them. [1347] The three states of intelligence are said to be wakefulness, sleep and sushupti. O king! However, these are based on maya and are not experienced by the pure atman. Sometimes, clouds exist in the sky and sometimes, they do not. In that way, the appearance and disappearance of different parts of the universe occur within the brahman. O dear one! Even if a piece of cloth does not exist, its potential existence can be inferred from the existence of threads that make it up. In that way, the potential existence of all the forms in the world can be inferred from the truth that is the foundation. Anything generally perceived as cause or effect is an illusion, since the two are linked. Anything with a beginning or an end is actually unreal. Without reference to the pure atman, all apparent transformations are inexplicable. For even an *anu* to be identified as real, it must be like the atman. [1348] Truth has no diversity. It is only the ignorant person who thinks otherwise. That is like two skies, two suns or two winds. [1349] Depending on what they want to do with it and the way in which it is used, men use different names for gold. In that way, the illustrious Adhokshaja is addressed in different ways by ordinary people and those who know about the Vedas. The cloud is created by the powers of the sun [1350] and is made visible by the sun. But it can lead to darkness and prevent the eye, which is a portion of the sun, from seeing the sun. In that way, ahamkara evolves from the brahman's attributes and obtains its powers from the brahman. However, this portion of the brahman can also lead to bonds and prevent the jivatman from perceiving the brahman. When clouds, created by the powers of the sun, are dispersed, the eye can see the sun, which is its own form. In that way, when the jivatman investigates and destroys the covering of ahamkara, it regains its memory. In this way, the sword of discrimination can be used to sever the maya of ahamkara, the bond created for the jivatman. One is then firmly established in realizing the atman. O dear one! This is said to be the ultimate [1351] destruction. O

scorcher of enemies! Those who know about subtle matters have averred that there is always a continuous creation and destruction of living beings, beginning with Brahma. Anything with transformation is always subject to being quickly taken away by the speedy flow of time. That is the cause behind creation and destruction. This time is without beginning and without end and is the lord's form. Its momentary movements are imperceptible, like the movement of stellar bodies in the sky. The progress of time has been described in terms of these kinds of laya—*nitya*, [1352] naimittika, prakritika and *atyantika*. O best among the Kuru lineage! Narayana is the reservoir of all kinds of existence. He is the creator of the universe. I have briefly described the account of his pastimes to you. Even the lord Aja [1353] is incapable of describing all of them. The ocean of samsara is extremely difficult to cross. If a person desires to cross it, no boat other than the illustrious Purushottama is appropriate. One must constantly serve him and listen to the account of his pastimes. That is the way for a man who is suffering because of many kinds of misery and affliction. In ancient times, the undecaying rishi Narayana told Narada about this Purana *samhita* [1354] and Narada told Krishna Dvaipayana about it. O great king! The illustrious Badarayana was pleased with me and taught me this Bhagavata samhita, as revered as the Vedas. O best among the Kuru lineage! When the rishis undertake a great sacrifice in the forest of Naimisha and Shounaka and the others ask him about it, this Suta will narrate it to them.'

Chapter 12(5)

Shri-Shuka said, 'The illustrious Hari is the atman of the universe. Brahma was created through his favours and Rudra arose out of his rage. He has been repeatedly described in this text. O king! Conquer this animal-like notion that you are going to die. Earlier, there never was a time when you did not exist. Unlike your physical body, you will not be destroyed. Like a sprout resulting from a seed, you will not be born in the form of your sons and grandsons. Like fire is distinct from kindling, you are more than your

physical body. In a dream, one can see one's head being severed and one's own self dying as a consequence. The atman, which is without birth and is immortal, looks at the physical body in that way. When a pot is broken, the bit of sky that was inside the pot becomes the sky, as it used to be earlier. In that way, when the physical body dies, the jivatman again merges with the brahman. The mind creates the physical body, the qualities and the karma the atman must undertake. But maya creates the mind and this leads to the jivatman resorting to samsara. A lamp possesses the characteristics of being a lamp as long as there is a combination of oil, a vessel, a wick and fire. The material existence of the body is like that. [1355] Enveloped in sattva, rajas and tamas, it is born and is destroyed. But this is not true of the self-luminous atman, which is distinct from the gross and the subtle body. It is eternal and without an end. As a foundation, it can be compared to the sky. O lord! Use the base of your intelligence and reasoning to think about Vasudeva. Thus, consider the atman that is inside your own self. Urged by the words of the brahmana, Takshaka won't be able to burn you. [1356] Death cannot burn the lord, who is Death to the agents of Death. "I am the brahman. I am the supreme abode. I am the brahman, the supreme destination." Thinking in this way, immerse yourself in the atman, which is free from every possible limit. Your atman is distinct from your body and when Takshaka bites you in the feet with his flickering tongue and mouth full of poison, you will not even notice him, or the world. O son! O king! In accordance with everything that you asked me about the activities of Hari, the atman of the universe, I have told you. What else do you wish to hear?'

Chapter 12(6)

Suta said, 'Vyasa's son was impartial in vision and had insight about the one who is the atman of everything. Hearing what this sage had narrated, Parikshit Vishnurata approached him. He joined his hands in salution, bowing his head down and touching his feet. The king said, "Your soul is full of compassion and since I have obtained your favours, I am successful. I have

heard from you about how I can directly obtain Hari, who is without beginning and without end. I do not think this is extraordinary. Great ones who have Achyuta in their hearts do show their favours to ignorant creatures who are tormented. We have heard about this Purana samhita from you and it describes the illustrious Uttamashloka. O illustrious one! I am not scared of death, because of Takshaka or because of anything else. You have shown me freedom from fear. I will enter the brahman, free of everything material. O brahmana! Grant me leave. I will control my speech [1357] and immerse myself in Adhokshaja. My mind is free of all wishes and desires. I will immerse myself and give up my breath of life. You have destroyed my ignorance and have shown me jnana, vijnana and devotion, and the illustrious, supreme and auspicious destination." Thus addressed, Badarayana's illustrious son granted him permission. Worshipped by the kings and the mendicants, he departed.

'The royal sage, Parikshit, used his atman to immerse himself in the atman. He meditated on the supreme. He controlled his breath of life and was as motionless as a tree. He sat on a seat of *barhi* grass, with the tips of the blades facing the east. He was seated on the banks of the Ganga, with his face facing the north. Without attachment and with all his doubts dispelled, the great yogi immersed himself in the brahman. O brahmanas! Takshaka was sent by the angry son of the brahmana. Wishing to kill him, he headed towards the king. Along the way, he saw Kashyapa. He [1358] satisfied him with riches and made him return. Since he could assume any form at will, he disguised himself as a brahmana and went and bit the king. The royal sage was immersed in the brahman and the fiery poison from the snake instantly reduced his body to ashes, while all the embodied beings looked on. Great lamentations arose everywhere on earth, the sky and the directions. Everyone among gods, asuras, humans and others, was astonished. The drums of the gods were sounded. Gandharvas and apsaras sang. The gods uttered words of praise and showered down flowers. Janamejaya heard that his own father had been bitten by Takshaka. Along with brahmanas, he undertook a sacrifice and angrily offered nagas as oblations. In that snake sacrifice, giant serpents were offered as oblations into the fire and were burnt.

Seeing this, Takshaka was scared and anxious and sought refuge with Indra. The king who was Parikshit's son did not see Takshaka there. He asked the brahmanas, "Where is Takshaka, worst among serpents? Why is he not being burnt?" "O Indra among kings! He has gone to Shakra for refuge and is being protected by him. Since the snake has been held back there, he is not falling into the fire." Extensive in his intelligence, Parikshit's son heard this. He told the officiating priests, "O brahmanas! Along with Takshaka, why not make Indra fall down into the fire?" Hearing this, in that sacrifice, the brahmanas invoked Indra as an oblation, along with Takshaka. "O Takshaka! Along with Indra, the lord of the Maruts, quickly fall down." The words spoken by the brahmanas dislodged Indra from his position, along with his vimana and along with Takshaka. His mind was agitated. Along with his vimana and Takshaka, he fell down from the sky. On seeing this, Brihaspati, of the Angiras lineage, spoke to the king. "O Indra among men! It is not appropriate that you should kill the king of the snakes. This one has drunk amrita. He is immortal and does not suffer from old age. A creature's life, death and destination are determined by his own karma. O king! There is no one else who should bestow joy or misery on him. O king! When a living being experiences death through snakes, thieves, fire, lightning, hunger, thirst, physical disease or mental ailment, this is because of his own *arabdha* karma. [1359] O king! Therefore, you should stop this sacrifice. It is being undertaken with the objective of harming others. The snakes are innocent. Every being must enjoy its destiny." Thus addressed, he honoured the maharshi's words and agreed. He stopped the snake sacrifice and worshipped the lord of speech. [1360]

'This is Vishnu's great maya. It is not discernible and cannot be countered. Though the atman is inside all creatures, creatures are confounded because of the working of the gunas. When one realizes the atman, the maya of insolence or fear is not visible. [1361] When one completely realizes the atman, there is no scope for many differing kinds of arguments, which are based on maya. The mind, which resorts to decisions and doubts, does not exist. Both created material objects and their causes do not exist. In that supreme state of bliss, the jivatman, along with its three attributes [1362] and

ahamkara are non-existent. There is no obstruction and nothing that can create obstructions. With the waves [1363] contained, the sage is in a state of delight. This is described as Vishnu's supreme state, which can only be described as "neti", "neti". Those who give up everything evil in their souls resort to nothing else. With love in their hearts, they control themselves and embrace him, and he dwells with them. Those who have given up notions of "I" and "mine" are the only ones who can go to Vishnu's supreme state. These degradations arise from associations with the body and the house. A person must tolerate disparaging words and never show anyone disrespect. Avoiding any identification with the body, he must never harbour enmity towards anyone. I bow down before the illustrious Krishna, infinite in his intelligence. I have been able to assimilate this samhita by meditating on his lotus feet.'

Shounaka said, 'O amiable one! Paila and the others [1364] were the disciples of the great-souled preceptor of the Vedas. Into how many branches did they, the expounders of the Vedas, divide them? Please tell us that.'

Suta continued, 'O brahmana! Parameshthi Brahma controlled his atman. A sound arose from the space inside his heart. When the functioning of the ears is stopped, [1365] it is this sound that can be heard. O brahmana! By meditating on this, yogis cleanse the impurities of their atmans. Having cleansed what is known as substances, activities and agents, [1366] they go to the place from which there is no return. The three syllables of omkara arose from the powers of the unmanifest, the self-ruling one. This is a sign of the illustrious brahman, the paramatman. He [1367] hears this subtle sound even when the sense of hearing is dormant and even when sight and the other senses are non-existent. It [1368] manifests itself inside the cavity of the atman and the Vedas are its elaboration. The brahman is its source and it directly expresses the paramatman. It is the eternal seed of all the mantras, Upanishads and Vedas. O extender of the Bhrigu lineage! It has the three sounds—"O", "U" and "M". These sustain the three states—gunas, names, objectives and consciousness. [1369] Using this, the illustrious Aja [1370] created the aggregate of the aksharas, the semi-vowels, the aspirants, the vowels and the consonants, classified into the short and the long. Using these, the illustrious one

created the four Vedas out of his four mouths, the *vyahriti*s [1371] and omkara. He desired to describe the tasks of the four kinds of officiating priests. [1372] He taught these to his sons, the brahmana rishis who were accomplished about the brahman. They became instructors of dharma and in turn, taught these to their own sons. In this way, from one generation to another, disciples who were firm in their vows obtained these. In the course of the four yugas, at the beginning of dvapara, maharshis classified them. [1373] With the passage of time, brahmana rishis saw that people were limited in lifespans, limited in spirit and evil in intelligence. Urged by the Achyuta in their hearts, they classified the Vedas.

'O brahmana! In this manvantara too, Brahma, Isha and the other guardians of the worlds requested the illustrious creator of the worlds to protect dharma. Therefore, using a portion of his portion, the lord was born as the son of Parashara and Satyavati. O immensely fortunate one! Having descended, he divided the Vedas into four parts. Like heaps of jewels, he divided the mass of mantras into four categories of samhitas—Rig, Sama, Yajur and Atharva. The immensely intelligent one summoned four disciples. O brahmana! The lord gave each of them one samhita. He spoke about the first samhita, known as *bahvrich*, to Paila. [1374] To the one known as Vaishampayana, he imparted the collection known as Nigada or Yajur Veda. He spoke about Sama Veda, the samhita composed according to metres, to Jaimini. The one known as Atharva-Anigrasi [1375] was taught to Sumantu, his disciple. The sage Paila taught his own samhita to Indrapramiti and Bashkala. O Bhargava! Bashkala divided the samhita that he had received into four branches and taught one to each of his disciples—Bodhya, Yajnavalkya, Parashara and Agnimitra. Indrapramiti was in control of his atman. He taught his samhita to the wise rishi Mandukeya, his son. His disciple, Devamitra, taught it to Soubhari and others. Shakalya, Mandukeya's son, divided his samhita into five parts and gave it to Vatsya, Mudgala, Shaliya, Gokhalya and Shishira. Shakalya's disciple, the sage Jatukarna, divided his samhita into three parts and adding nirukta, [1376] gave it to Balaka, Paija, Vaitala and Viraja. Bashkali [1377] used all the sub-branches and reclassified them as *Valakhilya* samhita, taught to Balayani, Bhajya and Kashara.

The brahmana rishis maintained bahvrich samhita in this way. If a person listens to the classification of these verses, he is freed from all sins.

'Vaishampayana's disciples were known as Charakadhvaryus. [1378] For their preceptor's sake, they undertook a vow to atone for the sin of killing a brahmana. [1379] Yajnavalkya, his disciple, told him, "O illustrious one! These ones are limited in substance. What can be gained from anything they undertake? I alone will perform extremely difficult austerities." Thus addressed, the preceptor became angry and said, "Enough! You have insulted the brahmanas. Give up everything that you have been taught by me." At this, Devarata's son [1380] vomited out the collection from the Yajur Veda. When he left, the sages saw the collection from the Yajur Veda. They looked at them greedily and assuming the form of *tittira* birds, [1381] gathered them up. This beautiful branch of the Yajur Veda came to be known as *Taittiriya*. O brahmana! Yajnavalkya wished to search out verses that were not known even to his preceptor. Therefore, he worshipped the lord, the sun god. Yajnavalkya said, "Oum! I bow down before the illustrious Aditya. In the form of the atman, he is present in the entire universe. He is in the form of time. He is inside the hearts of the four kinds of living creatures, beginning with Brahma and ending with clumps of grass. Like the sky, he covers everything that has a name from the outside, but is himself not covered. He gathers up the waters and gives them back for the sustenance of the worlds. He alone is the fragments of kshana, lava, nimesha and *samvatsara*. O bull among the gods! O Savita! O glowing one! Following the rituals of the sacred texts, we worship you thrice a day. [1382] You are the one who burns down the seeds of all sins and the resultant sufferings. O illustrious one! We meditate on your glowing orb. You are inside all mobile and immobile objects and they depend on you for refuge. You are the atman inside them, inspiring the aggregate of their minds, senses and breaths of life, which are distinct from the atman. This world has been swallowed up by a python and is unconscious, as if it is dead. The python's terrible mouth is known as darkness. O extremely compassionate one! Glance favourably towards it, so that thrice a day, the virtuous engage in ensuring what is beneficial. Urge their atmans towards what is known as their own dharma. Like a king on

earth, you travel around everywhere, generating fear among the wicked. You are surrounded by the guardians of the directions. In their cupped hands, which are like lotus buds, they bring you offerings. O lord! Therefore, I have approached and am worshipping your lotus feet, which are revered by the preceptors of the three worlds. I desire that part of the Yajur Veda that is not known to anyone else." Thus addressed, the illustrious sun god was pleased and assuming the form of a horse, taught the sage parts of the Yajur Veda that were not known to anyone else. The lord used these to classify fifteen branches of the Yajur Veda, known as *vajasanya*. [1383] He taught these to Kanva, Madhyadina and others.

'Jaimini possessed knowledge about the Sama Veda and Sumantu was his son. The sage [1384] taught the samhita to each of his sons. Jaimini's disciple, Sukarma, was a great brahmana and divided the great tree of the Sama Veda, with the Sama hymns, into one thousand samhitas. Sukarma's disciples were Hiranyanabha from Kosala, Poushyanji and Avantya, [1385] supreme in knowledge of the brahman, and they learnt this. Poushyanji and Avantya had five hundred disciples each. They were known as the northern reciters of the Sama hymns, though some among them came to be known as the eastern reciters. Poushyanji's disciples, Lougakshi, Mangali, Kulya, Kushida and Kukshi, received one hundred samhitas each. Hiranyanabha's disciple, Krita, taught his own disciples twenty-four samhitas. The rest were taught by Avantya, who was in control of his atman.'

Chapter 12(7)

Suta said, 'Sumantu, who knew about the Atharva Veda, taught it to his own disciple, [1386] who in turn spoke about the samhita to his own disciples, Pathya and Vedadarsha. Vedadarsha's disciples were Shouklayani, Brahmabali, Modosha and Pippalayani. O brahmana! Hear about Pathya's disciples. They were Kumuda, Shunaka, descended from the Angiras lineage, and Jajali, who knew about the Atharva Veda. Shunaka's disciples, Babhru and Saindhavayana, studied the two samhitas. Savarnya and others also did this.

Nakshatrakalpa, Shanti, Kashyapa, Angiras and others were teachers of the Atharva Veda.

'O sage! Now hear about the teachers of the Puranas. There were six who were teachers of the Puranas—Trayaruna, Kashyapa, Savarni, Akritavarna, Vaishampayana and Harita. From the mouth of my father, [1387] Vyasa's disciple, each of them learnt one part of the samhita. I became a disciple to each of them and learnt all of it. I, Kashyapa, Savarni and Akritavarna, Rama's [1388] disciple, learnt the four original samhitas from Vyasa's disciple. O brahmana! Using their intelligence and following the sacred texts of the Vedas, the brahmana rishis have determined the characteristics of the Puranas. Hear that. O brahmana! The learned have said that there are ten characteristics associated a Purana —*sarga, visarga, vritti, raksha, antara, vamsha, vamshanucharita, samstha, hetu* and *apashraya*. [1389] Some say there are only five and that this distinguishes the major ones from the minor ones. Sarga is about the generation of Mahat from the agitation of the gunas of the umanifest, the three kinds of ahamkara, the gross and the subtle and the senses and the objects of the senses. Through the favours of Purusha, visarga is the aggregation of desires of mobile and immobile objects, just as a seed is created from another seed. [1390] Vritti is the means whereby mobile and immobile creatures sustain themselves on other creatures. Goaded by desire and the injunctions, men create this for themselves. From one yuga to another yuga, for the protection of the universe and the destruction of those who hate the three, [1391] Achyuta descends. This is raksha. In each manvantara, there are said to be six kinds of appearances—Manu himself, the set of gods, Manu's sons, the lord of the gods, [1392] the rishis and Hari's descent through his portion. Through Brahma, vamsha is about the lineage of kings, progressing through the three phases of time. [1393] Vamshanucharita is about the conduct of their descendants. The wise have said that there are intrinsically four kinds of layas—naimittika, prakritika, nitya and atyantika. When all of these happen, that is samstha. The brahman is the ultimate apashraya, present in the three states of living creatures, wakefulness, sleeping and sushupti, covered in maya, but also distinct from them. The substance of a material object is the basis for its existence and assumes different names

and forms. [1394] That original seed is present, both separate and joined in all states, ending with death. When the mind is regulated, or when one transcends the three states, [1395] through yoga, one retreats from this world and realizes the atman. Thus, sages who know about the ancient accounts have spoken about the major and minor Puranas as being eighteen, depending on their characteristics. The names of the eighteen are known as Brahma, Padma, Vishnu, Shiva, Linga, Garuda, Narada, Bhagavata, Agni, Skanda, Bhavishya, Brahmavaivarta, Markandeya, Vamana, Varaha, Matsya, Kurma and Brahmanda. [1396] O brahmana! I have described to you the various branches expounded by the sage, [1397] his disciples and the disciples of his disciples. These extend the brahman's glory.'

Chapter 12(8)

Shounaka said, 'O Suta! O virtuous one! O supreme among speakers! May you live for a long time. Men are roaming around in darkness and you are the one who can show them the way to the other shore. Tell us this. People say that the rishi who was Mrikandu's son had a long lifespan. At the end of the kalpa, when this universe was destroyed, he was the only one left. In this kalpa, the bull among the Bhargava lineage was born in our lineage. [1398] No one born now has witnessed living beings destroyed through a deluge. When he was whirled around on that single ocean, he saw Purusha, in the wonderful form of an infant who was lying down inside a banyan leaf. O Suta! Among us, this generates curiosity and a doubt. You are revered as a great yogi and someone who knows about the Puranas. Please dispel this.'

Suta replied, 'O maharshi! The question you have asked will remove a confusion among people. This will lead to Narayana's account being sung and will destroy the impurities of kali yuga. In the course of time, from his father, Markandeya obtained the sacred thread, as is done for dvijas. Following dharma, he studied the hymns and came to possess austerities and learning. He observed great vows. He was tranquil. With matted hair, his garments were made out of bark. He carried a water pot and a staff and

wore a sacred thread and girdle. He was attired in black antelope skin and held a bead of rudrakshas and some kusha grass, so that the rituals were followed. At the time of the morning and evening sandhyas, he worshipped Hari in the form of the fire, the sun, preceptors, brahmanas and his own atman. Controlling his speech, he begged in the morning and the evening and gave whatever he got to his preceptor. He ate only once a day, when he had been granted permission by his preceptor. Otherwise, he fasted. In this way, engaged in austerities and studying, he spent one hundred million years. [1399] He worshipped Hrishikesha and conquered death, which is impossible to vanquish. Brahma, Bhrigu, Bhava, Daksha, the other sons of Brahma, humans, gods, ancestors and other beings were extremely astounded at this. Thus, the yogi worshipped Adhokshaja through great vows, austerities, studying and control. Withdrawing into this inner atman, he destroyed all hardships. The yogi fixed his mind in this great yoga. A long period of time passed, extending across six manvantaras.

'O brahmana! In the current seventh manvantara, Purandara got to know about this. He was scared of the austerities and started to create impediments. He sent gandharvas, apsaras, desire, the pleasant breeze of the spring and, from Mount Malaya, the children of rajas and intoxication to the sage. O lord! They went to his hermitage, on the northern slopes of the Himalaya mountains, where the River Pushpabhadra flows near the stone known as Chitra. The sacred hermitage was adorned with sacred trees and creepers. It was full of flocks of sacred birds. There were sacred and spotless bodies of water. There was the singing of intoxicated bees. Maddened cuckoos called. Crazy peacocks danced in ecstasy. It was full of flocks of crazy birds. The breeze entered, bearing with it the cool spray from waterfalls in the mountains, embraced by the fragrance of flowers. As it blew, it ignited desire. The moon arose, as if it was the face of the night. Rows of sprouts and blossoms covered the trees and the creepers in a net. Spring manifested itself. Followed by the songs of gandharvas and the playing of musical instruments, the god of love was seen, the lord of a bevy of women, and with a bow and arrow in his hand. Shakra's servants saw him seated there, having offered oblations into the fire. His eyes were closed and he was impossible

to assail. He was like the fire personified. The women danced in front of him and the singers sang. Delightful music was played from drums, veenas and cymbals. Kama fixed the five-headed weapon to his own bow. [1400] Spring, the children of rajas and Indra's servants tried to make his mind waver. Punjikasthali [1401] played with balls, her heavy breasts weighing down on her slender waist. The garlands were dislodged from the braids of her hair. Her eyes darted around here and there. As she ran after the balls, the string of her girdle loosened and the wind blew her garment away. Thinking that he was ready to be vanquished, the god of love released his arrow. But like all the efforts of those who do not believe in the lord, the attempt was unsuccessful. O sage! When they tried to harm him, the sage's energy burnt them down and they stopped, like children who have awoken a snake. O brahmana! Thus, though he was afflicted by Indra's followers, the great sage did not succumb to ahamkara. Among those who are great, this is not surprising. The illustrious lord of heaven saw and heard that the god of love and his companions had lost their energy. Perceiving the brahmana rishi's powers, he was filled with great surprise. While his [1402] mind was immersed in austerities, studying and control, Hari Nara-Narayana desired to show him his favours and manifested himself. One was fair and the other was dark. Their eyes were like freshly bloomed lotuses. They were four-armed and were clad in garments made out of bark and the skin of ruru antelopes. Their purifying hands held a sacred thread made out of three strings, a kamandalu, an upright staff made out of bamboo, a garland made out of lotus seeds and a broom to brush away insects. [1403] They were the personified forms of the Vedas and austerities. Their yellowish radiance possessed the complexion of lightning. They were tall in stature and the bulls among the gods worshipped them. On seeing the illustrious one's form as the Nara and Narayana rishis, he stood up with great respect. Like a staff, he bent down and prostrated himself. The bliss of seeing them satisfied his body, his mind and his senses. His body hair stood up and his eyes were full of tears. He was incapable of looking at them. He arose and humbly joined his hands in salutation. In his eagerness, it was almost as if he was embracing them. In faltering words, he said, "I bow down. I bow down." He gave them seats to

sit on and washed their feet. He worshipped them with offerings, unguents, incense and garlands. When they were comfortably seated and ready to shower their favours on him, he again bowed down at the feet of the two sages. He spoke to the revered ones.

'Markandeya said, "O lord! How can I describe you? It is through your urging that the breath of life pulsates. It is through your urging that speech, mind and the senses pulsate. This is for all living beings, Aja and Sharva included. That is also true of me. However, you are a friend to those who worship you. O illustrious one! These two forms of the illustrious one are for the welfare of the three worlds, the cessation of torments and the conquest of death. For the sake of protection, you assume many transcendental forms like this. Like a spider, you create and withdraw everything. I seek refuge at the feet of the protector and controller of mobile and immobile beings, where one is not touched by the impurities of karma, gunas and time. Sages who have grasped the essence of the Vedas praise you, bow down to you, constantly worship you and meditate on you. You are the personified form of liberation. O lord! From all sides, people are subjected to fear and we do not know of any refuge other than your feet. Brahma's lordship is for a period of two parardhas and therefore, he is also extremely scared of you, in the form of time. What need be said about beings who are created by him? Therefore, I worship the feet of the one whose intelligence represents the truth. I give up the body and other things that are useless, unreal and temporary. They are coverings for the atman and are thought of as different from you, the atman's preceptor. I will thereby obtain all the desired objects. O lord! O friend of the atman! Sattva, rajas and tamas are the result of maya. These causes behind creation, preservation and destruction are the result of your pastimes. Full of sattva, you alone lead to serenity. The other two do not free men from delusion. [1404] O illustrious one! Therefore, accomplished devotees worship your pure form, so loved by those who are your own. Great devotees can see the form of Purusha that is based on sattva. That is what grants people freedom from fear and joy in realization of the atman, nothing else. I bow down to the illustrious one, the pervasive Purusha. The universe is your form. You are the preceptor of the universe. You

are the supreme divinity. You are Narayana rishi and Nara, supreme among humans. You are hamsa, the controller of speech and the propounder of the sacred texts. You are established within a person's own breath of life, heart and the objects of the senses that he can see. However, his intelligence is enveloped in maya and his mind follows the misguided path of the senses. Therefore, he does not know you. However, when a person directly realizes you, the preceptor of everything, he knows you, the origin of everything. The vision of the sacred texts illuminates the mysterious nature of your atman. However, even though they try, wise ones, Aja being the foremost, are confounded. Depending on whichever school of thought is being debated, you present your nature in an appropriate form. I worship the great being, the comprehension about whose atman is concealed."'

Chapter 12(9)

Suta said, 'Praised in this way by the intelligent Markandeya, the illustrious Narayana, Nara's friend, was pleased and spoke to the descendant of the Bhrigu lineage. The illustrious one said, "O noble brahmana rishi! You are supreme among those who have meditated on the atman. Your devotion towards me is unwavering. You are controlled and have performed austerities and have studied. We are satisfied with the great vow you have observed. O fortunate one! I confer boons. I wish to confer a boon on you. Ask whatever you desire." The rishi replied, "O lord of the lord of the gods! May you be victorious. O Achyuta! You remove the afflictions of those who seek shelter with you. This is enough of a boon that you have shown yourself to me. After ripening their minds through yoga, Aja and the others see your lotus feet and obtain all their opulences. However, you are in front of my eyes. O one with eyes like the petals of a lotus! O jewel on the crest of everyone who is praised! Because of your maya, the worlds and the guardians of the worlds take everything to be differentiated. I want to witness that." O sage! Praised and worshipped in this way, the illustrious one

agreed to the rishi's wish. The lord smiled and returned to his hermitage in Badarika.

'The rishi remained in his hermitage and continued to think about his objective. He meditated on Hari everywhere—fire, the sun, the moon, water, the earth, the wind, the sky and within his own atman. He worshipped him with mental objects. [1405] Sometimes, he was so overwhelmed in the deluge of love that he forgot to worship him at all. O best among the Bhrigu lineage! O brahmana! Once, during sandhya, the sage was seated on the banks of the River Pushpabhadra and was meditating. A giant storm arose, generating a terrible roar. Fierce clouds followed it and showered down rain that was as heavy as the wheels of chariots. There was lightning and the loud roar of thunder. The oceans were seen in the four directions. They advanced and swallowed up the surface of the earth. The force of the wind stirred up waves, full of extremely fierce aquatic creatures. There was the terrible sound of whirlpools. All the four kinds of creatures, and he himself, suffered inside and outside. The water rose up into the sky. The wind was fierce and there was thunder and lightning. The world was scorched. The earth was deluged with water. On seeing this, the sage's mind was distressed and he was scared. As he looked on, the fierce waves rose up still higher and the great ocean was whirled around by the turbulent storm. Everything was filled by the wind and the clouds. The earth, the dvipas, the varshas and the mountains were deluged. The earth, the sky, heaven, the stellar bodies and their inhabitants, the three worlds and the directions were submerged in that deluge and the great sage was the only one who remained. He wandered around, as if he was blind and dumb, with his matted hair dishevelled. He was afflicted by hunger and thirst. He was oppressed by makaras and timingilas. He was struck by the storm and the wind. He descended into a fathomless darkness and roamed around. He could not determine the directions, the sky or the earth and was exhausted. Sometimes, he was dragged into a gigantic whirlpool. Sometimes, he was tossed by the waves. Sometimes, he was bitten by aquatic monsters. While trying to seize him, they fought against each other. Sometimes, he was filled with grief. Sometimes, he was filled with delusion. Sometimes, he experienced misery,

happiness or fear. Sometimes, he thought he was about to die. Sometimes, he suffered from physical ailments, mental ailments and the wind. Hundreds, thousands and billions of years passed in this way. With his atman shrouded in Vishnu's maya, he wandered around there.

'While wandering around, on one occasion, the brahmana saw a bit of ground that jutted out. There was a young nyagrodha tree there and it was adorned with fruits and foliage. He saw an infant boy lying down on a branch towards the north-east, within the cup of a leaf. His radiance swallowed up the darkness. His complexion was dark blue, like a giant emerald. His face was as beautiful as a lotus. His neck was like a conch shell. His chest was broad. His nose was excellent and his eyebrows were handsome. Because of his breathing, his radiant locks trembled. His beautiful ears were like conch shells. His lips had the radiance of coral. There was a sweet smile on his reddened lips. The ends of his eyes were red, like the whorls of a lotus. His looks and glances were enchanting. His deep navel was like a leaf, and as he breathed, the lines on his stomach moved. The Indra among brahmanas was amazed to see him pick up one of his lotus feet with the beautiful fingers of his hand, place it in his mouth, and suck it. On seeing this, his exhaustion vanished. He was so delighted that the lotus in his heart and the lotuses in his eyes blossomed. His body hair stood up in joy. Confused about who this extraordinary child in front of him was, he approached and asked. At that moment, along with the breathing, Bhargava was drawn inside the infant's body, like a mosquito. When he entered, he saw everything laid out exactly as it had been earlier. [1406] He was extremely surprised. He saw the entire universe manifested there, as if it was real—the sky, the heaven, the earth, the large number of stellar bodies, the dvipas, the varshas, the directions, the gods, the asuras, the forests, the countries, the rivers, the cities, the mines, the villages, the settlements of cattle, the ashramas, the varnas, the occupations, the gross elements, the gross manifestations, time, the many yugas, the kalpas, everything that regulates and everything else that can be regarded as a cause. The rishi saw the Himalayas, the River Pushpavaha [1407] and his own hermitage. As he gazed at the universe, the child exhaled him with his breathing and he fell down into the ocean of del-

uge. He again saw the elevated ground with the banyan tree and the infant lying down, inside the cup of a leaf. The child cast sweet and sidelong glances full of love towards him. As he glanced back, he was extremely agitated and rushed forward to embrace Adhokshaja. But the child entered his heart through his eyes and stationed himself there. The illustrious one is the lord of yoga himself and resides inside hearts. Like the undertakings of a person who is without a lord, [1408] the child vanished from the rishi's vision. O brahmana! Following him, the banyan tree and the water that deluged the worlds also vanished in an instant. He found himself in his own hermitage, as he had been earlier.'

Chapter 12(10)

Suta said, 'He thus experienced the powers of the yoga maya created by Narayana and sought refuge with him again. Markandeya said, "O Hari! I have sought shelter at your feet, which grant freedom from fear. Your maya appears in the form of jnana, but confounds even the gods." He had thus withdrawn himself completely inside his atman. The illustrious Rudra was travelling through the sky on his bull, along with Rudrani, and surrounded by his own companions. He saw him. On seeing the rishi, Uma spoke to Girisha. "O illustrious one! Look at the brahmana. His body, his mind and his heart have been controlled. He is like an ocean, when the schools of fish in the water are still and there is no wind. You are the one who ensures the success of austerities. Please confer success on him." The illustrious one [1409] said, "This brahmana rishi does not wish for any benedictions, moksha, or anything at all. He has obtained supreme devotion in the illustrious and undecaying Purusha. O Bhavani! However, let us converse with this virtuous person. The greatest gain for men is to be associated with virtuous people." The illustrious Ishana is the lord of all kinds of knowledge. He is inside all embodied beings and is the destination of the virtuous. Having said this, he approached him. However, he had withdrawn his intelligence and his conduct and was not aware on his own self, or the universe. Therefore, he did

not perceive that the two lords and atmans of the universe had themselves arrived. Understanding this, the illustrious Girisha used yoga maya to enter his heart. The lord entered, just as the wind enters through an opening. He perceived that Shiva had entered inside him, like a flash of lightning. His hair was matted. He was three-eyed and possessed ten arms. He was tall and as radiant as the rising sun. His garments were made out of tiger skin. He held a trident, a bow, a sword and a shield. He held a garland of rudrakshas, a drum, a skull and an axe. On seeing this sudden manifestation appear inside his heart, he was amazed. Ceasing his meditation, the sage wondered, "Who is this and where has he come from?" He opened his eyes and saw that Uma and the companions had also arrived. The sage bowed his head down before Rudra, the preceptor of the three worlds. He worshipped him, Uma and the companions with offerings. Having welcomed them, he gave them seats, padya, arghya, fragrances, garlands, incense and lamps. He said, "O lord! All your wishes are satisfied within your own self. O Ishana! You are the one who satisfies this universe. What can I do for you? I bow down to Shiva, the serene one. As the personficatin of sattva, you bestow pleasure. You are the personification of rajas. As the personification of tamas, you are terrible. I bow down before you." The illustrious one is the destination of the virtuous. Thus praised, the original god was pleased.

'Delighted, the original god smiled and spoke to him. The illustrious one said, "We three [1410] are the ones who bestow boons. Ask for the boon you wish. Our vision cannot be futile. A mortal person who sees us obtains immortality. I, the illustorius Brahma, the lord Hari himself, the worlds and the guardians of the worlds revere, worship and serve brahmanas who are virtuous, serene, without attachment, affectionate towards beings, without hatred, impartial in outlook and single-minded in devotion towards us. They do not perceive any difference between me, Achyuta and Aja, nor between themselves and others. That is the reason we worship those like you. Places with water are not tirthas. Images without life are not gods. These purify after a long period of time, but the sight of those like you purifies instantly. We bow down before brahmanas. They are our forms and are full of the three. [1411] Meditating on the atman, they control themselves and undertake

studying and austerities. Seeing you and hearing you, the perpetrators of great sins are purified, even those who are outcastes. What need be said about those who converse with you?" He is the one who is decorated with the moon and his words were full of the mysteries of dharma. They were like a reservoir of amrita and the rishi was not satisfied at drinking them in with his ears. Because of Vishnu's maya, he had been whirled around for a long time and had suffered greatly. But Shiva's amrita-like words dispelled all his piles of hardship. He spoke these words. Markandeya said, "It is impossible for those with bodies to comprehend the lord's pastimes. The lords of the universe are controlled by him and worship him. To make embodied creatures accept dharma, those who propound it also generally practise it and praise those who perform the approved acts. The conduct of the illustrious one is not affected by his own maya, nor are his powers tainted by this. He is like a conjurer exhibiting tricks. I bow down to the illustrious one. The gunas are in his atman and he uses these gunas to create. He is absolute and without a second. He is the preceptor and the one who is the personified form of the brahman. O supreme lord! Your sight is itself a boon. What superior boon can I ask for? From the mere act of seeing you, a man accomplishes all his wishes and all his desires come true. However, you are capable of showering down all the cherished wishes. Therefore, I do ask for a boon from you. May I have devotion towards the illustrious Achyuta and towards those like you who are devoted to him." The illustrious Sharva was thus worshipped and praised by the sage in sweet words that were approved of by Sharvaya. [1412] He said, "O maharshi! Since you are devoted to Adhokshaja, all your wishes will be fulfilled. Till the end of the kalpa, you will obtain pious fame and will not suffer from old age or death. O brahmana! You possess the radiance of the brahman. You will have knowledge about the three phases of time, [1413] transcendental knowledge and non-attachment. You will also be a propounder of a Purana." [1414] Having bestowed this boon on the sage, the three-eyed lord left. He told the goddess about his [1415] deeds about what he had experienced earlier. The supreme one from the Bhargava lineage obtained the greatness of the great yoga. He roams around even now, immersing himself single-mindedly in Hari. I have described to you

how the intelligent Markandeya experienced the illustrious one's maya and extraordinary powers. Some ignorant men say this is like the maya of samsara created from his atman, which men have been whirling around in since the beginning. [1416] O noble one from the Bhrigu lineage! What has been described is full of the powers of the one who wields a chakra in his hand. If a person hears this, or makes it heard, he does not have to experience samsara, the result of his past karma.'

Chapter 12(11)

Sounaka said, 'You are diverse in your learning. You know everything about the conclusions of the sacred texts and the tantras. You are devoted to the illustrious one and know the truth. Therefore, I am asking you about the following. Shri's consort is pure consciousness. However, those who follow the principles of tantra conceive him and worship him as one with limbs, companions, weapons and accoutrements. O fortunate one! Therefore, describe to us these techinques of kriya yoga. We are eager to know the principles of kriya, whereby mortals become accomplished and achieve immortality.'

Suta replied, 'Having bowed down to my preceptors, I will tell you about Vishnu's glory. The one who was born from the lotus and other preceptors of the Vedas and the tantras have spoken about this. His Virat form begins with maya and includes the nine principles and transformations. [1417] When these have been created and infused with consciousness, the three worlds become visible. This is his cosmic or Purusha form. His feet are the earth. Heaven is his head. The sky is his navel. His eyes are the sun. His nostrils are the wind. The directions are the lord's ears. His genitals are Prajapati. The lord's anus is death. The guardians of the world are his arms. The moon is his mind. His eyebrows are Yama. Modesty is his upper lip. Greed is his lower lip. Moonlight is his teeth. His smile is delusion. The lord's body hair is the trees. The clouds are the hair on Purusha's head. Any person's dimensions can be gauged by measuring his limbs and their positions. In a similar

way, the great Purusha can be gauged from the positions of the worlds. The unborn one wears Koustubha and that is the radiance of the self-luminous atman. The effulgence spreading from this is directly the shrivatsa mark the lord has on his chest. He wears his own maya as the garland of wild flowers, consisting of many different kinds of gunas. The hymns of the Vedas constitute his yellow garments. The three syllables are his sacred thread. [1418] The god wears two earrings shaped like makaras and these are samkhya and yoga. His diadem bestows freedom from fear to all the worlds and is the supreme place for Parameshthi. [1419] The seat on which he lies down is known as Ananta and is the unmanifest. [1420] The lotus throne on which he sits is said to be sattva, consisting of dharma, jnana and the others. [1421] The mace that he wields is the main form of prana, consisting of energy, fortitude and strength. His supreme conch shell is the principle of water, the Sudarshana chakra is the principle of fire, his sparkling sword is like the sky and is the principle of space and the shield is the priniciple of tamas or ignorance. His Sharnga bow is the form of time and the quiver represents the principle of karma. The senses are said to be his arrows and the mind, which can control them, are his chariot. The objects of the senses are the external appearance of the chariot. His *mudra*s are the purpose of activity. [1422] One must consecrate oneself and that destroys all the sins of the atman. The illustrious one can then be worshipped and the solar disc is the place for worshipping the divinity. He is Bhagavan and playfully carries a lotus, signifying the implicit potencies in the word "bhaga". [1423] The illustrious one is worshipped with two whisks, representing dharma and fame. O brahmanas! The umbrella held over his head signifies his abode of Vaikuntha, with freedom from fear. The one known as Suparna [1424] represents the three Vedas and bears Purusha, the personified form of a sacrifice. The illustrious Shri does not leave him and directly represents Hari's atman. Vishvaksena, foremost among his attendants, is known as the personified form of the tantras. [1425] Nanda and the others, his eight gatekeepers are Hari's attributes, anima and the others. O brahmana! Vasudeva, Samkarshana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha are designated as direct manifestations of Purusha himself. The illustrious one is conceived as *vishva*, guiding external objects; taijasa,

guiding the senses; *prajna*, guiding the mind; and turiya, guiding transcendental consciousness. [1426] The illustrious lord Hari thus manifests himself in four forms, each with separate limbs, attendants, weapons and ornaments, but all four are his own expansions. O bull among brahmanas! He is the source of the Vedas. He is the one who illuminates himself. He is complete in his own glory. It is through his own maya that he creates, preserves and destroys, and is accordingly addressed. He is described as differentiated. However, those who are devoted to him can uncover his transcendental nature and realize him as their own atmans. O Shrikrishna! O Krishna's friend! [1427] O bull in the lineage of the Vrishnis! O one who scorched the lineages of the kings on earth! O one whose valour does not diminish! O Govinda! O one whose glory is sung by the women of Vraja and by your servants! O one whose fame is like a tirtha! O one whose deeds are auspicious to hear! Save your servants. If a person rises at the right time, controls himself and immerses his mind in these attributes of the great Purusha and meditates, he realizes him within his heart.'

Shounaka said, 'Vishnurata was listening and the illustrious Shuka spoke to him about the seven different categories that reside in each of the solar months. We are faithful ones who wish to hear. Please tell us about their names, their tasks, about how they are engaged and about the manifestations of Surya, who is nothing but Hari's manifestation.'

Suta replied, 'Vishnu is in the atmans of all beings. He is without a beginning and his maya has fashioned Surya, who travels through the worlds and creates these worlds. Hari is the original atman who is one and is the creator of everything. For the worlds, it is he who is Surya. He is the foundation of all the rites of the Vedas and the rishis have designated him by different names. O brahmana! Hari's maya is without origin and it is this that leads him to be described according to nine categories—the time, the place, the ritual, the agent, the instrument, the task, the sacred text, the objects and the fruits. In his form of time, beginning with Madhu, [1428] the illustrious one travels along twelve months, regulating the worlds and with twelve different sets of associates. In the month of Madhu, the controllers are Dhata, Kritasthali, Heti, Vasuki, Rathakrit, Pulastya as the sage and Tumburu. [1429]

In the month of Madhava, [1430] the controllers are Aryama, Punjikasthali, Praheti, Kachchhanira, Athouja, Pulaha and Narada. In the month of Shukramasa, [1431] the controllers are Mitra, Menaka, Pourusheya, Takshaka, Rathasvana, Atri and Haha. In the month of Shuchimasa, [1432] the controllers are Varuna, Rambha, Sahajanya, Shukra, Chitrasvana, Vasishtha and Huhu. In the month of Nabhomasa, [1433] the controllers are Indra, Pramlocha, Varya, Elapatra, Shrota, Angira and Vishvavasu. In the month of Nabhasya, [1434] the controllers are Vivasvan, Anumlocha, Vyaghra, Shankhapala, Asarana, Bhrigu and Ugrasena. In the month of Tapomasa, [1435] the controllers are Pusha, Ghritachi, Vata, Dhananjaya, Suruchi, Goutama and Sushena. In the month of Tapasya, [1436] the controllers are Parjanya, Senajit, Varcha, Airavata, Kratu, Bharadvaja and Vishva. In the month of Sahomasa, [1437] the controllers are Amshu, Urvashi, Vidyuchchhatru, Mahashankha, Tarkshya, Kashyapa and Ritasena. In the month of Pushyamasa, [1438] the controllers are Bhaga, Purvachitti, Sphurja, Karkotaka, Urna, Ayu and Arishtanemi. In the month of Ishambhara, [1439] the controllers are Tvashta, Tilottama, Brahmapeta, Kambala, Shatajit, Jamadagni and Dhritarashtra. In the month of Urjamasa, [1440] the controllers are Vishnu, Rambha, Makhapeta, Ashvatara, Satyajit, Vishvamitra and Suryavarcha. These are the opulences of the illustrious Vishnu, in the form of Aditya. If men remember them at the time of the sandhyas, from one day to another day, their sins are taken away. Through each of the twelve months, the divinity travels along with six sets of associates, spreading virtuous intelligence everywhere, for this world and for the next. Rishis chant his glories through hymns from the Sama, Rig and Yajur Vedas. Gandharvas chant his praise and the best of apsaras dance before him. The nagas yoke his chariot and the yakshas drive the chariot from the front. The extremely powerful rakshasas push the chariot from the rear. There are sixty thousand unblemished brahmana rishis known as *valakhilya*s. They advance in front of him, praising and worshipping the lord. The illustrious lord Hari is without a beginning and without an end. He is without birth. In this way, from one kalpa to another kalpa, he divides his own atman and protects the worlds.'

Chapter 12(12)

Suta said, 'I bow down to great dharma. I bow down before Krishna, the creator. I bow down to brahmanas. It is after this that I will speak about eternal dharma. O brahmanas! I have spoken to you about Vishnu's extraordinary conduct. You had asked me about this. If a man is truly a man, he should hear about it. Hari, who himself destroys all sins, has been extolled here. He is the illustrious Narayana Hrishikesha, the lord of the Satvatas. It describes the mysterious supreme brahman, whose power causes the creation and destruction of the universe. It has discussions about achieving vijnana. It has spoken about bhakti yoga, with the objective of non-attachment. It has the account of Parikshit and the account of Narada. Because of the curse of the brahmana, the royal sage, Parikshit, engaged in *praya* [1441] and there was a conversation between Parikshit and Shuka, bull among brahmanas. There is a description of how one can use yoga to free oneself at the time of death, the conversation between Narada and Aja, a recital of avataras and the original creation through Pradhana. There is a conversation between Vidura and Uddhava, a conversation between Kshatta [1442] and Maitreya, a question about Purana samhitas and the dormant state of the great being. There is a description of the creation from Prakriti, the seven kinds of transformation and the generation of the cosmic egg, from which, Virat Purusha evolved. There is the gross and subtle progress of time, the generation of the lotus and the slaying of Hiranyaksha, to raise the earth up from the ocean. There is a description of the creation of superior species, inferior species and nether regions, Rudra's creation and the appearance of Svayambhuva Manu from the half-man and half-woman form. As a wife, he obtained Shatarupa, supreme among women. Through virtuous wives, Kardama Prajapati had sons. The illustrious one's avatara was the great-souled Kapila. There is a conversation between the intelligent Kapila and Devahuti. There is the account of the nine sons of Brahma, the destruction of Daksha's sacrifice and the conduct of Dhruva, followed by that of Prithu and Prachinabarhi. O brahmanas! There is the conversation

with Narada and the accounts of Priyavrata, Nabhi, Rishabha and Bharata. There is a description of dvipas, varshas, oceans, mountains, rivers, the position of stellar bodies and the arrangements of patala and hell. There is the birth of Daksha as the son of Prachetas and the offspring of his daughters—gods, asuras, humans, inferior species, trees, birds and others. O brahmanas! There is the birth and death of Tvashta's son, [1443] two of Diti's sons, the lords among the daityas, and the conduct of the great-souled Prahlada. There is a recital of the manvantaras and the freeing of the Indra among elephants. There is a description of Vishnu's avataras in different manvantaras, Hayashira and the others. The lord of the universe appeared as a tortoise, a fish, narasimha and as a vamana, so that the residents of heaven could obtain amrita through the churning of the ocean. The great battle between gods and asuras and the lineages of the kings have been described. There is Ikshvaku's birth and his lineage and that of the great-souled Sudyumna. Ila's account has been narrated and Tara's account has also been narrated. There is a description of the kings of the solar dynasty, Shashada, Nriga and others. There are accounts of Sukanya, Sharyati's daughter, the intelligent Kakutstha, Khatvanga, Mandhata, Soubhari and Sagara. There is the conduct of Rama, Indra among Kosalas, and it destroys all sins. There is the account of Nimi giving up his body and the birth of Janaka's lineage. Rama, Indra among Bhargavas, exterminated kshatriyas from earth. Through Ila, there is an account of the lunar dynasty, Yayati and Nahusha. There are accounts of Bharata, Dushyanta's son, Shantanu and his son.

'The lineage of Yadu, Yayati's eldest son, has been described. The illustrious lord of the universe descended there and was known by the name of Krishna. He was born in Vasudeva's house, but grew up in Gokula. The innumerable deeds of the enemy of the asuras has been described. As a child, he sucked out Putana's life with the milk, broke the cart, crushed Trinavarta, Baka and Vatsa, Dhenuka and his brother and slaughtered Pralamba. He protected the gopas from the forest conflagration that encircled them. He subdued Kaliya, the great serpent, and saved Nanda. The maidens observed a vow and Achyuta was pleased through this vow. He bestowed his favours on the wives of the brahmanas who were performing sacrifices and the

brahmanas repented. He held up Govardhana and Shakra and Surabhi worshipped him, consecrating him at a sacrifice. For several nights, Krishna sported with the women. He killed the evil-minded Shankhachuda, Arishta and Keshi. After Akrura arrived, Rama and Krishna departed, while the women of Vraja lamented. They went and saw Mathura. There was the death of the elephant, Mushtika, Chanura, Kamsa and others. He brought back from the land of the dead the son of Sandipani, his preceptor. O brahmanas! While residing in Mathura with Uddhava and Rama, Hari did what would bring pleasure to the Yadus. On several occasions, there was the destruction of Jarasandha's army. There was the slaying of the Indra among the Yavanas and the establishment of Kushasthali. From the world of the gods, there was the bringing of Parijata and Sudharma. Crushing the enemies in a battle, Hari abducted Rukmini. Hara was made to yawn in a battle and Bana's arms were severed. He killed the lord of Pragjyotisha and rescued the maidens who had been abducted there. The greatness and destruction of Chedi, Poundraka, Shalva, the evil-minded Dantavakra, Shambara, Dvivida, Pitha, Mura, Panchajana and others have been described. Varanavata was burnt down and the Pandavas were engaged for reducing the earth's burden. Using the pretext of the curse of the brahmanas, he arranged for the destruction of his own lineage. There is the wonderful conversation between Uddhava and Vasudeva. All the knowledge about the atman is described there and the determination of dharma is spoken about. Using the powers of his own yoga, he gave up the mortal world.

'There is a description of the conduct and attributes of yugas and the disturbances men face during kali yuga. There are the four kinds of pralaya and the three kinds of creation. The royal sage, the intelligent Vishnurata, gave up his body. There is a description of how the different branches were composed [1444] and the virtuous Markandeya's account. He is the atman of the universe and there is a description of the great being's expanse and of his form as the sun. O best among the brahmanas! In this way, I have told you everything that you had asked me about here, about his pastimes, avataras and deeds. I have recounted everything to you here. When a person is falling down, is stumbling, is afflicted or is sneezing, even if involuntarily

chants, “I bow down to Hari”, he is freed from all sins. If men chant about the infinite and illustrious one or hear about his powers, he enters their hearts and completely cleans all hardships, just as the sun destroys darkness, or the wind drives away the clouds. Those who do not speak about the illustrious Adhokshaja, speak about unreal and temporary things instead. He alone is truth. He alone is auspicious. He alone is sacred. All qualities arise from the illustrious one. He alone is beautiful and attractive, appearing in newer and newer forms. His accounts are always like a great festivity in the mind. If men chant about Uttamashloka’s glory, that is what dries up the ocean of grief. Even if they are not composed in perfect metres and verses, if words are chanted about Hari’s glory, they purify the universe. Otherwise, they are like tirthas frequented by crows and not by swans. Spotless and virtuous people only exist where Achyuta exists. Even if words are imperfectly created and composed, as long as they depict the infinite Utttamashloka’s names and fame, they free people from this deluge of sin. Virtuous ones hear them, sing them and chant them. If naishkarma is devoid of devotion towards Achyuta, it is not bright enough. That jnana is not devoid of impurities and taints. Karma that is not rendered to the lord is always inferior and inauspicious. How can that purify? Supreme efforts, the conduct of the varnas and the ashramas, austerities, learning and other things may be for fame and prosperity. However, if one respectfully hears the chanting of his qualities and does similar things, one never fails to remember Sridhara’s lotus feet. [1445] Remembrance of Krishna’s lotus feet destroys everything inauspicious and evil. It enhances sattva, purification and devotion towards the paramatman. It is full of jnana, vijnana and non-attachment. O foremost among brahmanas! You are extremely fortunate. He is in the atmans of all beings and you have him in your hearts. He is the divinity Narayana, the lord of all the gods. Love him constantly. Immerse yourselves in him and worship him. When King Parikshit was engaged in praya, in the assembly of the great rishis, from the mouth of the supreme rishi, I had formerly heard the truth about the atman and I have now been reminded about it. O brahmanas! I have described the greatness of Urukrama Vasudeva to you. It swiftly destroys all that is inauspicious. If a person hears this continuously,

with single-minded devotion, for one yama or even for one kshana, if a person hears one shloka, half a shloka, a quarter of a shloka, or even one-eighth of a shloka, as long as he hears it faithfully, he purifies his atman. A person who hears it on the eleventh or twelfth lunar day has a long life. If a person is attentive and hears it while fasting, he is purified of sins. If a person controls himself, fasts and reads this samhita in Pushkara, Mathura or Dvaravati, he is freed from fear. Those who sing it, hear it or chant it obtain all their objects of desire from gods, sages, Siddhas, ancestors, Manus and kings. By studying the Rig Veda, the Yajur Veda and the Sama Veda, brahmanas obtain rivers of honey, rivers of ghee and rivers of milk. Those fruits can be obtained by studying this. Brahmanas who control themselves and study this Purana samhita go to the supreme destination the illustrious one spoke about. A brahmana who studies this obtains wisdom, a king obtains sovereignty up to the girdle of the ocean, a vaishya becomes the lord of riches and a shudra is purified from sins. The lord of everything, Hari, destroys all the impurities of kali yuga brought about by time. However, he is not chanted about as much elsewhere. [1446] The illustrious one, infinite in his forms, is extolled here. He is directly described here, in every verse and in connection with every account. He is without birth. He is infinite. He is the truth about the atman. It is through his powers that he creates, preserves and destroys the universe. Aja, Shakra, Shankara and the other lords of heaven find it impossible to comprehend him. I bow down before Achyuta. Through his own atman, he has evolved the nine potencies. [1447] Within himself, he has laid out the abodes of mobile and immobile beings. The illustrious one's state is that of pure consciousness. I bow down to the eternal one, the bull among the gods. I bow down before Vyasa's son, the one who destroys everything inauspicious. His heart was attracted towards the pastimes and activities of the unvanquished one. For the sake of that divine bliss, he lived alone, immersing himself in that consciousness and giving up everything else. Out of his compassion, he expounded on this Purana, which is like a lamp towards the truth.'

Chapter 12(13)

Suta said, 'Brahma, Varuna, Indra, Rudra and the Maruts praise him through divine hymns. He is chanted about in the Vedas, the Vedangas and the Upanishads, in duly arranged lines, and by those who recite the Sama hymns. When yogis meditate with their minds fixed on him, they see him. The large number of gods and asuras cannot comprehend his limits. I bow down to that god. The illustrious one appeared in the form of a tortoise and when it was rotated, the sharp points of Mount Mandara scratched his back, making him sleepy. May the wind from his breathing protect you. As a legacy of that, the waters of the ocean beat against the shoreline, ebbing and flowing and imitating his breathing. Even now, the ocean ceaselessly continues and does not stop.

'Now hear about the total number of verses in each Purana and the main theme and objective of each, the greateness of giving them as gifts, the gifts they must be given with, and about teaching them. Brahma has ten thousand verses, Padma fifty thousand, Vishnu twenty-three thousand and Shiva twenty-four thousand. Bhagavata has eighteen thousand, Narada twenty-five thousand, Markandeya nine thousand and Agni fifteen thousand and four hundred. Bhavishya has fourteen thousand and five hundred, Brahmavaivarta has eighteen thousand and Linga has eleven thousand. Varaha has twenty-four thousand, Skanda has eighty-one thousand and one hundred and Vamana is said to have eleven thousand. Kurma is said to have seventeen thousand, Matsya fourteen thousand, Garuda [1448] nineteen thousand and Brahmanda twelve thousand. Thus, the total number of verses in all the Puranas is said to be four hundred thousand. Of these, Bhagavata is said to have eighteen thousand. Earlier, when Brahma was seated on the lotus in his navel and was scared of samsara, out of compassion towards him, the illustrious one revealed it completely to him. Its beginning, middle and end is full of accounts about non-attachment. It has the amrita of accounts about Hari's pastimes and delights virtuous people and gods. It has the essence of all of Vedanta. It possesses the attribute of oneness between the brahman and the atman. It is second to none and its only purpose is kaivalya. On a full moon night in the month of Prosthapada, if a person places the Bhaga-

vata Purana on a golden throne and donates it, he goes to the supreme destination. In the midst of an assembly of the virtuous, all the other Puranas shine only as long as the Bhagavata Purana, the ocean of amrita, is not heard. The Bhagavata Purana is said to be the essence of all Vedanta. If a person is satisfied with the sap of its amrita, he will never be attracted to anything else. Just as Ganga is the best among rivers, Achyuta the best among gods and Shambhu the best among all those who are devoted to Vishnu, this is the best among all the Puranas. O brahmanas! Just as the supreme Kashi is the best among all kshetras, Bhagavata is the best among all the Puranas. The unblemished Bhagavata Purana is loved by all those who are devoted to Vishnu. It has chanted about that supreme and pure jnana that can only be obtained by paramahamsas. It is full of jnana, non-attachment and devotion and about freedom from all karma. If a man hears it, reads it properly and thinks about it devotedly, he is freed. He is unmatched. In ancient times, he illuminated Brahma [1449] with this lamp of jnana. Brahma passed it on to the sage Narada and Narada passed it on to Krishna. [1450] Vedavyasa passed it on to his son, Indra among yogis. [1451] Out of compassion, Shuka passed it on to Bhagavadrata. [1452] He is pure and spotless. He is the amrita that is without sorrow. We meditate on that supreme truth. I bow down to the illustrious Vasudeva who is the witness. Kah desired liberation and out of compassion, he told him about this. I bow down to Shuka, the Indra among yogis who was a personified form of the brahman. He freed Vishnurata, who was bitten by the snake of samsara. O lord of the gods! Act so that in life after life, devotion towards your feet is generated in me. O lord! You are our protector. Chanting his name destroys all kinds of sins. I prostrate myself before the one who destroys all misery. I bow down before the supreme Hari.'

This ends the Twelfth Skandha and the Bhagavata Purana.

[1] For example, *shloka*s 2.4.10, 4.1.2 and 4.5.11 of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad use the two expressions together.

[2] Chandogya Upanishad, 7.1.2.

[3] *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, F.E. Pargiter, Oxford University Press, London, 1922.

[4] Sutas were bards, minstrels, raconteurs.

[5] Ugrashravas was a suta.

[6] The Critical Edition of the Valmiki Ramayana was brought out by the Baroda Oriental Institute, now part of the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda. The Critical Edition of the Mahabharata was brought out by the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune.

[7] The Bhagavad Gita translation was published in 2006, the translation of the Critical Edition of the Mahabharata in ten volumes between 2010 and 2014 (with a box set in 2015) and the translation of the Critical Edition of the Valmiki Ramayana in 2017. The translations are by Bibek Debroy, and in each case, the publisher is Penguin.

[8] *The Bhagavatamahapuranam*, Nag Publishers, Delhi, 1987. This is a reprint of the Kshemaraja Shrikrishnadass, Venkateshvara Press, Bombay, text.

[9] https://web.archive.org/web/20081012022829/http://www.sub.uni-goettingen.de/ebene_1/fiindolo/gretil/1_sanskr/3_purana/bhagp/bhp1-12u.htm

[10] http://www.ochs.org.uk/research/bhagavata-purana-research-project

[11] *The Bhagavata Purana, Selected Readings*, Ravi M. Gupta and Kenneth R. Valpey, Columbia University Press, 2016.

[12] *Krishna: The Beautiful Legend of God (Srimad Bhagavata Purana Book X)*, Edwin Bryant, Penguin Classics, 2004.

[13] *A Prose English Translation of Srimad Bhagavatam*, Manmatha Nath Dutt, H.C. Dass, Calcutta, 1896.

[14] *Srimad Bhagavatam*, Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, 1970 to 1977.

[15] *The Bhagavata Purana*, translated and annotated by Ganesh Vasudeo Tagare, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi, 1976.

[16] *Srimad Bhagavada*, Swami Tapasyananda, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Chennai, 1980.

[17] *Srimad Bhagavata Mahapurana with Sanskrit Text and English Translation*, C.L. Goswami and M.A. Shastri, Gita Press, 2006.

[18] *A Study of the Bhagavata Purana or Esoteric Hinduism,* Purnendu Narayana Sinha, Freeman and Company, Benares, 1901.

[19] Two of the six Indian schools of *darshana* (philosophy).

[1] Filled with food.
[2] For herding the cattle.
[3] Gunja is a small herb that has red and black berries. Their mothers had adorned them with these objects.
[4] The supreme soul.
[5] Putana.
[6] Sesamum seeds and water are offered to dead relatives.
[7] *Ajagara*.
[8] A yojana is a measure of distance, between 8 and 9 miles.
[9] This is a second boy speaking.
[10] Krishna.
[11] Krishna wished to prevent them from entering, but destiny had worked against this.
[12] Agha merged into Krishna.
[13] Agha.
[14] Ugrashrava, the son of Romaharshana or Lomaharshana. A *suta* was a charioteer, but also a bard and raconteur. Here, it is a proper noun, another name for Ugrashrava.
[15] Granted by god, Parikshit.
[16] Worst among kshatriyas, one who is a kshatriya only in name.
[17] The boys.
[18] Krishna.
[19] Do not stop eating.
[20] Brahma.
[21] To the mothers of the boys and the calves by restoring them, and to Brahma by allowing the boys and the calves to remain hidden.
[22] He assumed the forms of both the boys and the calves.
[23] Krishna.
[24] Of the cowherds.
[25] Asava is liquor made through distillation, not mere fermentation.
[26] By chanting *mantra*s.
[27] A mark made on the forehead.
[28] Day and night are divided into eight yamas, each yama is a period of three hours.
[29] Wives of cowherds (*gopa*s).
[30] This is interpreted in complicated ways. But this is simpler.

[31] There was no reason for Krishna to change his behaviour, even if he was in the forms of the boys and the calves. However, because Krishna was in the forms of the boys and the calves, the others became more affectionate.

[32] Of joy.

[33] Both calves and boys.

[34] Krishna's.

[35] Balarama.

[36] The cowherd boys.

[37] Brahma.

[38] A small measure of time, equated with half a *kshana* or half a *lava*.

[39] Brahma.

[40] There is the white of sattva in the moonbeams and the red of rajas in the eyes.

[41] Yoga leads to eight major *siddhi*s or powers. These are anima (becoming as small as one desires), *mahima* (as large as one desires), *laghima* (as light as one wants), *garima* (as heavy as one wants), *prapti* (obtaining what one wants), *prakamya* (travelling where one wants), *vashitvam* (powers to control creatures) and *ishitvam* (obtaining divine powers).

[42] Of *samkhya*.

[43] Sacraments.

[44] The three qualities (guna) of sattva, rajas and *tamas*.

[45] This is reminiscent of *shloka*s in the Upanishads.

[46] Five senses of action, five senses of perception and the mind.

[47] Vishnu. This is an extremely difficult shloka to translate and we have taken some liberties.

[48] In the sense of establishing the brahman by the rejection of '*neti, neti*', 'not this, not this'.

[49] Brahma.

[50] The curtain of maya.

[51] Brahma's.

[52] The cowherds.

[53] The swan.

[54] Brahma has four heads.

[55] Such devotees.

[56] This, and many succeeding shlokas, are interpreted in different ways.

[57] The supreme soul.

[58] Ego.

[59] A paramanu is an ultimate particle characterized by the trait that it cannot be divided further. It alone is combined with others.

[60] That is, universe.

[61] Narayana means someone whose resting place (*ayana*) was the water (*nara*).

[62] After performing austerities.

[63] When Krishna showed Yashoda everything inside his mouth.

[64] When Brahma stole the cowherd boys and the calves.

[65] Shiva.

[66] This is a reference to different avataras, as gods (Vamana), rishis (Vyasa), men (Rama, Krishna), inferior species (Varaha), aquatic creatures (Kurma, Matsya).

[67] The wheel of life, the circle of birth and death.

[68] And understand that it is actually a rope.

[69] The supreme soul.

[70] These are the eleven divinities who preside over the eleven senses—the mind (Chandra), intelligence (Brahma), ahamkara (Shiva/Sharva), hearing (the divinities in charge of the directions), touch (Vayu), sight (Surya), taste (Varuna), smell (the two Ashvins), speech (Agni), hands (Indra) and legs (Upendra). There seems to be a sense that the residents of Vraja are more fortunate than these divinities. These divinities have experienced Achutya only through respective senses. However, the residents of Vraja have experienced him with all their senses.

[71] She pretended motherly affection. Her family means Bakasura and Aghasura.

[72] A kalpa is the longer cycle of creation and destruction.

[73] Brahma.

[74] Mura's enemy, Krishna.

[75] *Vatsapada*.

[76] Krishna and Balarama.

[77] One moves from *koumara* to pouganda when one becomes six years old. Pouganda lasts until one attains the age of ten.

[78] Before this, Krishna and Balarama only tended to calves. They were now allowed to herd adult cattle.

[79] Place of pilgrimage.

[80] Govardhana.

[81] A chakora is a partridge, a krouncha is a curlew/heron, a chakravaka is the ruddy goose or Brahmany duck and a bharadvaja is a skylark.

[82] The text uses the word Krishnaa, meaning dark, for the Yamuna. Since the serpent is also dark (*krishna*), there is a play on words.

[83] Kalindi, the river with dark waters, is another name for the Yamuna.

[84] Something that hears with its eyes, a name for Kaliya.

[85] Weaned female calves.

[86] Yashoda wanted to follow Krishna into the pool.

[87] Though it is sometimes used in the sense of an instant, a muhurta is a measure of time equal to forty-eight minutes.

[88] Garuda.

[89] Gandharvas are celestial musicians and are semi-divine.

[90] Celestial singers.

[91] The text uses the term *dandashuka*.

[92] We have translated vijnana as self-knowledge, the transcendental consciousness. We will use jnana for knowledge.

[93] Detachment from fruits and renunciation of action; and action with a desire for the fruits, respectively.

[94] The texts of the Vedas, or related to them.

[95] The twilight zones.

[96] Garuda.

[97] Island or region.

[98] Ramanaka dvipa, in the middle of the ocean.

[99] Serpents. Nagas (also known as *uraga*s) are different from snakes. They are semi-divine, can assume any form at will and reside in specific locations.

[100] Garuda ate serpents. So that he did not eat serpents, Brahma made this arrangement. The serpents received offerings from those who worshipped snakes. Taking turns, the serpents offered their respective shares to Garuda, so that he would not eat them. Sometimes, it is also suggested that every month, one serpent, and not just the offering, was given to Garuda.

[101] Respectively Garuda and Vishnu.

[102] Kaliya.

[103] Garuda.

[104] A sage who was meditating in the water.

[105] The forest.

[106] *Kakapaksha* (like a crow's wing) is a description of sidelocks of hair on the temples of boys and young men.

[107] *Kumbha* is a medicinal plant.

[108] Demons, progeny of Danu.

[109] But Pralamba didn't think Balarama was invincible.

[110] Balarama.

[111] Meru.

[112] The animals.

[113] Krishna and Balarama's.

[114] Chant their lessons when called by their preceptor, a reference to brahmana disciples. The frogs have also been quiet hitherto.

[115] A reddish insect, sometimes identified with a firefly.

[116] The meaning remains unclear and is subject to interpretation. For example, those who were too proud to farm had to repent.

[117] It moved from cloud to cloud.

[118] Indra's bow is the rainbow.

[119] The word *padapa* means tree, signifying something that drinks up water with its feet (the roots).

[120] Indra.

[121] Kings are urged by brahmanas to undertake works of charity.

[122] A lotus that blooms in the night.

[123] Sacrifices at which oblations are offered out of the first harvest after the rainy season.

[124] They couldn't travel during the rainy season. A snataka is a student who has finished studying and is ready to embark on the next phase of life. The word snataka is derived from *snana* (the act of taking a bath), ritually performed before anything auspicious is undertaken.

[125] Stated simply, they wait for their physical deaths.

[126] Entered Vrindavana forest.

[127] Alternatively, embraced him in their minds.

[128] The text doesn't make it clear whether a single gopi is singing this, whether they are singing this collectively, or whether they take turns. Probably the last is intended. They sometimes address the others in the singular, sometimes in the plural.

[129] Meaning both Krishna and Balarama.

[130] Damodara is one of Krishna's names. He was named Damodara because Yashoda tied a rope (*dama*) around his stomach (*udara*).

[131] The shores of the lakes are where the bamboo grew and the flute was made out of bamboo. The word *arya* means noble, but it also means forefather. The lakes are shedding tears of joy because the flute indirectly originated with them. They are like forefathers. The trees shed drops of dew.

[132] Celestial vehicles.

[133] With the milk still in their mouths.

[134] Meant for senior gopis.

[135] An allusion to different branches of the sacred texts followed by sages. Sages meditate with their eyes closed.

[136] A comparison is being made with the swirling currents in the rivers.

[137] Krishna is similar in complexion to a cloud and therefore, the cloud is his friend. The cloud is not showering down flowers, but drops of rain that are being compared to flowers.

[138] This shloka has complicated interpretations. We have given a translation that seems to be accurate, but is also simple and not convoluted. There is no reason to take pulinda women to mean women from backward and aboriginal classes, as most interpretations render it. Pulindaka is indeed used for barbaric tribes, usually residing in mountains. But this is along the bank (pulinda) of a river. Therefore, pulinda can simply refer to people who live along the banks of a river.

[139] For tethering the animals, through the nose, or for tying the hindlegs of cows at the time of milking.

[140] Hemanta is the cold season, the months of Margashirsha (also known as Agrahayana) and Pousha. The first month, Margashirsha, is roughly mid-November to mid-December. Kumarikas are young unmarried maiden girls, less than the ages of ten and twelve. Havishya is food that can be offered as oblations. It is simple and has no seasoning. It is only eaten on special occasions, such as when a vow is being observed. Katyayani is one of Parvati's names and Katyayani *vrata* (vow), also known as Gouri vrata, is performed by maidens to get married, or obtain a groom. Bhadrakali is also one of Parvati's names. These kumarikas may have been even younger, since Krishna was just over six years old then.

[141] Supreme lord, in the feminine.

[142] This prayer is being recited in the singular.

[143] This can be taken as a proper noun or as an adjective. Shyamasundara is one of Krishna's names, meaning one who has a beautiful dark-blue complexion.

[144] Nanda.

[145] The word used in the text is *anahata*, the opposite of *ahata*. Ahata means struck, injured, impaired. The opposite means virgin, perhaps implying the hymen is intact.

[146] Bathing naked wasn't the only crime. In addition, while observing a vow, the girls had not maintained silence and had sported in the water.

[147] The gopis.

[148] It cannot be used as seed.

[149] Katyayani.

[150] *Stoka* means small, so this can also be translated as Little Krishna.

[151] When a person has consecrated himself for a sacrifice, he does not eat until the sacrifice is over, nor does he give food to someone else. What is being said is that this isn't a general rule, but only applies to sacrifices where animals are slaughtered, or soutramani sacrifices. Otherwise, there is no such bar. A soutramani sacrifice is an animal sacrifice in which liquor is also offered.

[152] Of the brahmanas.

[153] The four types of food are those that are chewed (*charvya*), sucked (*choshya* or *chushya*), licked (*lehya*) and drunk (*peya*).

[154] About emancipation and liberation from samsara.

[155] From going to meet Krishna.

[156] The physical birth, the investiture of the sacred thread and consecration for sacrifices.

[157] Emancipation.

[158] Shri is known for being fickle, but not vis-à-vis him.

[159] Krishna and Balarama.

[160] Interpreted as—has it been sanctioned by the sacred texts?

[161] A yajna and a kratu are both sacrifices. However, the former is performed with a sacrificial post and the latter without one. More specifically, the former is performed with sacrificial animals and the latter without sacrificing animals.

[162] That is, rain.

[163] Dharma, *artha* and kama.

[164] This has complicated interpretations. The supreme lord cannot be dependent on karma. If he confers fruits according to karma, he becomes dependent on others.

[165] Interpreted as studying and teaching.

[166] The text uses the word *rajanya*. In the present context, this is synonymous with *kshatriya*.

[167] The three higher *varna*s.

[168] That is, intercourse.

[169] Govardhana.

[170] A dish made out sweetened milk and rice.

[171] *Apupa*s are small and round cakes made out of flour and fried. *Shashkulya*s are baked cakes.

[172] Gifts given to brahmanas after the sacrifice.

[173] Shvapakas are sometimes equated with chandalas. *Shva* means dog and *paka* means to cook. Thus, shvapaka means someone who cooks dogs (eats dogs) or cooks for dogs (lives with dogs). Chandala has different nuances and a chandala is not necessarily a shudra. A chandala is also of mixed parentage, with a shudra father and a brahmana mother. More generally, chandalas are outcastes, while shudras are within the caste fold.

[174] The word used is *pradakshina*, which is much more specific than a mere act of circling. This circling or circumambulation has to be done in a specific way, so that the right side (*dakshina*) always faces what is being circled.

[175] Krishna had two simultaneous forms, his own and that of Govardhana.

[176] Samvartaka clouds should not have been released until it was the time for universal destruction.

[177] This depended on status. For example, seniors inhaled the fragrance of his head, equals and intimate ones embraced him and juniors touched his feet.

[178] Young gopis.

[179] They went to Nanda.

[180] Daityas are a specific category of demons, the progeny of Diti.

[181] The name of this demon wasn't given earlier.

[182] Dhenuka, Rasabha means donkey.

[183] Except the last sentence, Garga's quote is a repetition of shlokas from Chapter 10(8).

[184] Surabhi is the divine cow who yields all the objects of desire. She is the mother of all cattle. She is Daksha's daughter and is married to the sage Kashyapa. Goloka is a world meant for cattle and is above all the other worlds. The Mahabharata describes that this was given to Surabhi by Brahma.

[185] Of maya.

[186] Such as Aditi.

[187] Govinda = *Go* + Indra, a slightly convoluted derivation of Govinda. Usually, Govinda = Go + *vinda*, a person who protects/cherishes/obtains (vinda) cattle (go).

[188] *Vidya* means knowledge. Thus vidyadhara, one who holds knowledge.

[189] These had remained hidden inside the mountains earlier.

[190] Varuna and his companions.

[191] The tense used requires an explanation. The incident occurs later, in Chapter 10(39). However, at the time when Shuka is recounting all this to Parikshit, the incident belongs to the past tense.

[192] Chapters 10(29) to 10(33) are full of beautiful poetry. They are about *rasa* or *rasa krida*/*rasa lila*, a circular dance involving Krishna and the gopis. There are various interpretations of Krishna's use of yoga maya. There are also extensive commentaries on these five chapters. We have deliberately kept the translation simple.

[193] The beams of the moon are like a hand, making the wife blush, or smearing kunkuma on her face.

[194] For boiling on stoves, same for the dishes.

[195] That bliss destroys all karma, even if it is auspicious.

[196] Shishupala.

[197] *Raka* means the day/night of the full moon and Rakesha (the moon on such a night) is the lord (*isha*) of raka.

[198] The personified form of tulasi.

[199] Vishnu.

[200] The word used for the moon is *enanka*, meaning the one with the marks of a black antelope.

[201] Ratipati, Rati's consort.

[202] Ashvattha is the holy fig tree, plaksha and nyagrodha are kinds of fig trees, naga (*nagakesara*) is the Indian rose chestnut, punnaga is nutmeg, champaka is a tree with yellow and fragrant flowers, malati is a kind of white jasmine, mallika, jati and yuthika are also kinds of jasmine, chuta is mango, priyala is the chironji tree, panasa is jackfruit, kovidara is a kind of orchid, jambu is rose apple, arka is the sun plant, bilva is wood apple, bakula is a tree with fragrant blossoms, amra is mango and both kadamba and nipa mean the same kind of tree.

[203] The trees, plants and grass growing on earth.

[204] As the dwarf incarnation.
[205] The branches.
[206] Trinavarta.
[207] Name for Lakshmi.
[208] Aghasura.
[209] Arishta, described in Chapter 10(36).
[210] Vyoma, described in Chapter 10(37).
[211] Being used as a name for Brahma.
[212] Manmatha is a name for Kama, meaning someone who confounds the mind. There is thus a play on words.
[213] Alternatively, when people meet a wise person.
[214] The gopis are being compared to the sacred texts. Without being able to see Krishna, the rituals of the sacred texts serve no purpose.
[215] Krishna does not belong to the four categories mentioned. But he does not love people back immediately.
[216] One day for a god is one human year, that is, 360 days approximately. The human lifespan is 100 years, so a god's lifespan is 36,000 human years. A few interpretations take the god mentioned in the text as Brahma, which increases the duration further. But that interpretation doesn't seem to be necessary.
[217] They formed a circle, interlocking each other's arms, including that of Krishna's.
[218] He assumed many different forms, so that there was a Krishna between every two gopis.
[219] There were many Krishnas, as dark blue as clouds.
[220] *Dhruva pada*.
[221] The *nakshatra*s.
[222] The dams constructed along fields. There is an allusion to Krishna having broken down common social norms.
[223] The bees were buzzing like singing gandharvas.
[224] That is, he was not affected by any of this.
[225] And is not polluted.
[226] A muhurta is a period of forty-eight minutes. Brahma muhurta is named after Brahma and is an auspicious time just before dawn, regarded as the last muhurta of the night. The precise hour depends on the time when the sun rises.
[227] The god in question is Shiva, Ambika is Parvati's name.

[228] Krishna and Balarama.
[229] Kubera is the lord of riches/treasure. Guhyakas are a semi-divine species who are Kubera's companions.
[230] Lakshmi.
[231] The arms of the rivers are the waves, which actually fail to touch him.
[232] Meaning Yashoda.
[233] Minstrels and bards who sang the composition of others.
[234] Krishna's name, one who wears a garland of wild flowers.
[235] The moon.
[236] The ones sent by Kamsa to kill Krishna.
[237] Vasudeva.
[238] Divine sage.
[239] Meaning Shiva. The idea is that Kamsa offers a sacrifice to Shiva and Shiva's bow as a counter to Krishna.
[240] Akrura was generous in giving gifts and was known as Danapati.
[241] Jarasandha was Kamsa's father-in-law.
[242] Garuda.
[243] Cucumber.
[244] Shankha means Panchajana and Yavana means Kalayavana.
[245] Viryashulka is when the maiden is offered to the suitor who shows the most valour (*virya*), *shulka* meaning price.
[246] Described in Chapter 10(64).
[247] An akshouhini is an army, consisting of 21,870 chariots, 21,870 elephants, 65,610 horse riders and 109,350 foot soldiers.
[248] As in pradakshina. Since this is a good omen, Akrura will be able to see Krishna.
[249] The text has this double negation.
[250] Bodies.
[251] Shakra.
[252] Literally, sweet-smelling and fragrant. There is also a plant and a flower by the name of sougandhika.
[253] *Kshetra* is the field, that is, the body. Kshetrajna is one who knows the body, that is, the soul, both human and universal.
[254] Shvaphalka was Akrura's father.
[255] Kamsa's order.
[256] Since the word used is *kishora*, they were older than ten and younger than fifteen.

[257] A mixture of honey and water, customarily offered to a guest.
[258] Akrura was senior.
[259] Alternatively, instead of offspring, the subjects.
[260] Akrura was also descended from Madhu and was also Madhava.
[261] Nanda.
[262] *Krura* means cruel and Akrura means someone who is not cruel.
[263] The blinking of an eye.
[264] Krishna.
[265] The chariot had halted there.
[266] Ananta, Shesha.
[267] Interpreted as Kailasa.
[268] Strictly speaking, two big toes and other toes. That is what a literal translation would be.
[269] The number nine means the *saptarshi*s, Marichi, Atri, Angira, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu and Vasishtha, and two others who are not in the list, but are important enough. For example, Kashyapa and Jamadagni are possibilities.
[270] Uparichara Vasu.
[271] The personified forms of the goddesses. Pushti is nourishment, Gira is speech/Sarasvati, Kanti is beauty, Kirti is fame, Tushti is contentment, Ila is the earth, Urja is energy, Avidya is the negation of Vidya and Shakti is power.
[272] Akrura.
[273] Interpreted as ahamkara.
[274] That which is not born is interpreted as Prakriti and the other is Purusha.
[275] Brahma.
[276] Prakriti.
[277] Destiny, nature and one's own nature, respectively.
[278] Karma and yoga having been mentioned, this is interpreted as the *pancharatra* mode, *agama* texts followed by the Satvatas.
[279] Narasimha.
[280] Parashurama.
[281] Barbarians, those who did not speak Sanskrit.
[282] Akrura.
[283] Akrura.
[284] The Ganga.

[285] *Shreni*s.
[286] When the ornaments were in pairs.
[287] Applied collyrium.
[288] This is interpreted as distress due to separation from him.
[289] Krishna.
[290] After death. Form like his own means *sarupya*.
[291] Later, Sudamna is often referred to as Sudama.
[292] Padya is water to wash the feet, arghya is a gift.
[293] Maidservant.
[294] Literally, bent in three places—neck, breasts and waist.
[295] This has an interpretation that they used contrasting colours to enhance their own natural complexions. Krishna used yellow paste and Balarama used blue paste.
[296] The rainbow.
[297] When awake and when asleep. When sleeping, he had nightmares.
[298] In a mirror, or in the water.
[299] Ghosts.
[300] Nalada is identified as the Indian spikenard, or as the *Hibiscus rosa*. Here, it probably means the hibiscus, red in colour.
[301] The elephant keeper also had assistants. Hence the plural.
[302] Trinavarta.
[303] Shankhachuda.
[304] Dhenuka was killed by Balarama, but a distinction is not being drawn between Krishna and Balarama. Alternatively, the residents of Mathura may have got some wrong reports.
[305] Here too, Vatsa and Baka were actually killed by Krishna.
[306] Literally, a boy who is younger than fifteen years.
[307] Does not speak and remains silent, or defends adharma.
[308] Ramaa, Lakshmi.
[309] A pole erected for a sacrifice to Indra is brought down after the sacrifice is over.
[310] In the arena.
[311] The royal gallery.
[312] Kamsa.
[313] Divine ones.
[314] Kamsa's wives and the wives of his brothers.

[315] This curse has been described in Chapter 9(19). Yadu and his descendants were barred from inheriting Yayati's kingdom. This doesn't solve the problem, since Ugrasena was also descended from Yadu. The interpretation is that Ugrasena was permitted this deviation because he was so commanded by Krishna.

[316] Shura's son means Vasudeva. Dvija samskara means the second birth and refers to the sacred thread ceremony.

[317] The brahmanas.

[318] Cows and calves.

[319] As long as they were students, they would follow the vow of *brahmacharya*. This was taken by reciting the *gayatri mantra*. Therefore, the vow is known as gayatra.

[320] Avantipura is the city of Avanti, also known as Ujjaini/Ujjain. By deduction, Sandipani originally hailed from Kashi/Varanasi, though it is also possible that this refers to his *gotra* being Kashyapa.

[321] Vedanga means a branch of the Vedas and these were six kinds of learning that were essential to understand the Vedas—*shiksha* (phonetics), *kalpa* (rituals), *vyakarana* (grammar), *nirukta* (etymology), *chhanda* (metre) and *jyotisha* (astronomy). Dhanurveda means the science of warfare. The six schools of *darshana* or philosophy are nyaya, *vaisheshika,* samkhya, yoga, *mimamsa* and Vedanta. Samkhya and yoga are not mentioned in the text and Vedanta is left implicit. The text uses the word *anvikshiki* knowledge (translated as knowledge of logic), which would naturally mean mimamsa, closely allied to nyaya. The six methods of political science (*rajaniti*) are *sandhi* (peace), *vigraha* (war), *yana* (marching), *asana* (remaining in one place), *dvaidhi* (dividing one's forces into two parts) and *samshraya* (seeking refuge).

[322] There are sixty-four types of arts (*kala*)—(1) singing; (2) playing on musical instruments; (3) dancing; (4) drama; (5) painting; (6) painting the body; (7) making designs with rice and flowers for offerings; (8) using flowers to make beds; (9) painting teeth, limbs and garments; (10) ornamenting a floor with precious stones; (11) preparing a bed; (12) playing music with water pots; (13) mixing colours; (14) making wreaths and garlands; (15) ornamenting the head; (16) beautifying the body with garments; (17) decorating the ears; (18) making fragrances; (19) making ornaments; (20) jugglery; (21) using disguise; (22) sleight of hand; (23) preparing tasty food; (24) preparing tasty and colourful drinks; (25) needlework and weav-

ing; (26) puppetry; (27) making musical instruments; (28) solving puzzles; (29) making images; (30) speaking cryptically; (31) reciting from books; (32) dramaturgy; (33) solving enigmatic verses; (34) cane work and making arrows; (35) spinning; (36) carpentry; (37) architecture; (38) testing silver and jewels; (39) metallurgy; (40) decorating jewels with colours; (41) mineralogy; (42) medicine using herbs; (43) arranging fights between rams, cocks and quails; (44) teaching parrots to speak; (45) driving out (an enemy or a disease); (46) hairdressing; (47) reading letters hidden inside a closed fist; (48) learning mlechchha languages; (49) learning indigenous languages; (50) making toy carts with flowers; (51) constructing magic squares; (52) conversation; (53) mind reading; (54) lexicography; (55) prosody; (56) gambling; (57) controlling evil spirits; (58) attracting remoted objects; (59) playing children's games; (60) using mystical powers; (61) playing tricks; (62) disguising the inferior quality of a cloth; (63) using rituals; and (64) making amulets. Since these are translated from long Sanskrit words, the list of sixty-four varies from one interpretation to another.

[323] A maharatha is a great charioteer.

[324] Balarama.

[325] This is Sandipani speaking.

[326] The preceptor of the gods.

[327] Type of duck.

[328] Krishna.

[329] Nanda.

[330] That is, Vasudeva.

[331] Arishta.

[332] Thrice the length of a palm tree.

[333] Respectively, human, subhuman and Narasimha avataras.

[334] Depending on the interpretation, this is also translated in a slightly different way.

[335] The plural is used, but it is clearly a single gopi speaking.

[336] The hair on the bee.

[337] The women from Mathura.

[338] Lakshmi, the one who is seated on a lotus.

[339] Vijaya is Arjuna's name. Vijaya's friend is an indirect way of referring to Krishna.

[340] There are seven nether regions—*atala*, *vitala*, *sutala*, rasatala, *talatala*, *mahatala* and *patala*.

[341] As Rama, the Indra among the apes being Vali.
[342] Respectively Sita and Shurpanakha.
[343] Meaning Nanda.
[344] *Sushupti*.
[345] Svairinis are loose women who have sex with anyone they want, but only with those from the same varna. Here, the word is being used in a broader sense of a courtesan. Pingala's story will be told in the Eleventh Skandha.
[346] There is scope for interpretation. Alternatively, they realized that Adhokshaja was within themselves.
[347] Kshana.
[348] Or, what is the point of being born as Brahma?
[349] In the eyes of their husbands and families.
[350] The king of medicines is interpreted as amrita, drunk by the gods.
[351] That of the gopis.
[352] Brahma.
[353] Uddhava.
[354] Here, Vasudeva means Krishna's father and the king is Ugrasena.
[355] Trivakra.
[356] This is a reference to the boon asked for by Trivakra.
[357] From the sacred texts.
[358] The sight of virtuous ones purifies instantly, while tirthas and gods have to be worshipped for a long time.
[359] Hastinapura.
[360] Dhritarashtra. Dhritarashtra's mother was Ambika. While Dhritarashtra was physically blind, the blindness can also be taken to be metaphorical. Dhritarashtra's son was Duryodhana.
[361] Somadatta.
[362] Drona.
[363] Kripa.
[364] Duryodhana is often referred to as Suyodhana.
[365] Ashvatthama.
[366] Akrura.
[367] By deceitful, one presumably means Shakuni, though Shakuni is not named.
[368] Pritha/Kunti and Akrura were cousins.
[369] Akrura.

[370] Krishna and the others.

[371] The wealth is enjoyed by sons.

[372] Akrura was generous in giving gifts and was known as Danapati.

[373] Krishna's intention is to kill all the wicked kings, not only the ones who have assembled at the moment. Therefore, Jarasandha should remain alive, so that he can raise more armies.

[374] Jarasandha.

[375] As Nanda's son.

[376] This can be interpreted as Jarasandha's affliction because of his son-in-law's death.

[377] Jarasandha was born in two pieces and these were brought together and revived by the demoness Jara.

[378] Respectively, the chariots of Krishna and Balarama.

[379] The comparison is with a river.

[380] Of the chariots. Alternatively, the shields.

[381] Balarama.

[382] Respectively, words from the sacred texts, as well as common maxims. Friendly kings restrained Jarasandha from retiring to the forest.

[383] Minstrels and bards who also composed.

[384] Kalayavana asked Narada who would be good enough to fight against him and Narada mentioned the Yadavas.

[385] The architect of the gods.

[386] The science of architecture.

[387] Sudharma is the assembly hall of the gods and Parijata is Indra's celestial coral tree.

[388] We have taken liberties with the text in this sentence, since the meaning isn't obvious. Does it mean within Sudharma? Does it mean near the Parijata tree? We have interpreted it more generally.

[389] Kubera's eight treasures (*nidhi*) are named Mahapadma (large lotus), Padma (lotus), Shankha (conch shell), Kurma (tortoise), Nila (sapphire), Kunda (jasmine), Kumuda (a jewel) and Makara. However, the list varies.

[390] Kalayavana.

[391] A makara is a mythical aquatic creature, but can loosely be translated as shark or crocodile.

[392] Krishna.

[393] This cave has been identified as a lake near Dhavalapura (Dholapur), ten yojanas from Mathura. There used to be a mountain there earlier.

[394] Kalayavana.

[395] Kartikeya, Kumara.

[396] To protect them, Muchukunda had gone to heaven, though he was unable to enjoy heaven, since he was busy fighting the asuras.

[397] Muchukunda asked for the boon that he might sleep for a long time. If anyone disturbed his sleep, he would instantly be reduced to ashes.

[398] Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.

[399] That is, you are the most important of these three. Therefore, you are Vishnu.

[400] Yuvanashva's son was Mandhata. Mandhata's (Youvanashva's) son was Muchukunda.

[401] Past, present and future.

[402] Vaasudeva.

[403] That is, made of earth.

[404] Through predatory creatures, burial or cremation.

[405] Without taints.

[406] The one without qualities or attributes, the brahman.

[407] The five senses and the mind.

[408] Breathing.

[409] Kali yuga hadn't quite arrived, since it would set in after Krishna's death. However, it was imminent.

[410] Kalayavana was only the leader of the yavanas.

[411] Indra.

[412] Revata's son was Kakudmi/Raivata and his daughter was Revati. This incident has been described in Chapter 9(3).

[413] Svayamvara is a ceremony where the maiden herself (*svayam*) chooses her husband (*vara*) from assembled suitors.

[414] Garuda.

[415] Shishupala's.

[416] There were eight forms of marriage—some desirable, others less so. One of these undesirable forms is rakshasa, where the bride is forcibly abducted by the groom.

[417] As conveyed by the brahmana.

[418] Daughter of the mountain, Parvati.

[419] The brahmana's.

[420] There is the implicit image of those kings being like kindling and Rukmini resembling a fire generated by churning kindling.

[421] From the brahmana.
[422] Constellation.
[423] Kundina was the capital of Vidarbha, identified with Kaundinyapura in Amravati division.
[424] *Triyama*, three yamas, nine hours.
[425] Brahma.
[426] An interpretation is added. Since Rukmini was born from Shri's portion, the brahmana would be blessed with prosperity.
[427] Bhishmaka.
[428] This is the citizens speaking with each other.
[429] This is Rukmini praying.
[430] Those whose husbands were alive.
[431] Literally, a kanthasutra is a thread worn around the neck. It can be interpreted as the *mangalasutra* worn by married women.
[432] Rukmini. They gave her *prasada*.
[433] We have deliberately not translated shyama. Usually, this means dark. But shyama also means a woman who has not had children and it is this second meaning, in the sense of virgin, which is intended here. More specifically, shyama is used for a maiden who is not yet sixteen years old.
[434] The enemy.
[435] This is Jarasandha speaking.
[436] Krishna.
[437] The shame contributing to this.
[438] Addressed to Rukmini. His words are partly addressed to Rukmini and partly to Krishna.
[439] Brahma.
[440] This is addressed to Rukmini.
[441] Such as the sun or the moon, reflected in different images in different vessels of water.
[442] One perceives the sun through the eye.
[443] A small measure of time.
[444] Kuhu is the deity (and the day) for the night of the new moon. The moon disappears (dies), but this is not real.
[445] Rukmi.
[446] Identified as a village near Vidisha, in Bhopal district.
[447] Ramaa, Shri/Lakshmi.

[448] Kama is the god of love. When he disturbed Shiva, the fire in Shiva's third eye reduced him to ashes. Kama thus became Ananga (the one without a body).

[449] Kama resorted to Vasudeva.

[450] Pradyumna would kill the asura Shambara.

[451] Mayavati used to work in the kitchen. She was Rati, Kama's wife, and had taken birth so that she might be reunited with her husband.

[452] Great maya.

[453] A malevolent being that survives on human flesh.

[454] Dvaraka.

[455] For example, the shrivatsa mark and Koustubha were missing.

[456] The wife.

[457] An auspicious sign.

[458] The one without birth. Here, it means Surya.

[459] A bhara is a measure of weight. It can roughly be taken to be almost 100 kgs.

[460] Ugrasena.

[461] Satrajit's brother.

[462] Jambavat.

[463] Timingila is a fish that devours whales (*timi*). The reference is to Rama in the Ramayana. Jambavat was Rama's ally and devotee.

[464] Satrajit.

[465] Surya's.

[466] In an attempt made by Duryodhana at Varanavata, a story told in the Mahabharata. Kunti and the Pandavas escaped.

[467] Kritavarma's brother and Hridika's son.

[468] That is, why should he not be killed?

[469] Hastinapura.

[470] Krishna and Balarama. They already knew, but followed human norms.

[471] There were several kings of Mithila named Janaka. Indeed, they were all known as Janaka, descended from the Janaka lineage. This Janaka is not the Janaka who was Sita's father. Balarama taught Duryodhana/Suyodhana how to fight with the club.

[472] Satrajit.

[473] Respectively linked to destiny and nature.

[474] How could there be calamities when Krishna resided in Dvaraka? This shloka is interpreted in various ways. For instance, the residents of Dvaraka had forgotten about Krishna's glory. One must however bear in mind Shri-Shuka's statement about his having explained it before. Therefore, this probably means that Krishna was simply behaving like an ordinary human.

[475] Also written as Shvaphalka. Shvaphalaka was Akrura's father. He possessed the power to cause showers and Akrura inherited these powers. In exile, Akrura went to his maternal grandfather's house, in Kashi.

[476] Over and above Akrura's powers, there was the power of the Syamantaka jewel and its presence or absence.

[477] That is, Satyabhama's sons.

[478] That it is with Akrura and not with Krishna.

[479] Thus, it is obvious that you possess the jewel.

[480] It was now known that the Pandavas had not perished in Varanavata.

[481] Satyaki.

[482] Technically, Nakula and Sahadeva are not Parthas. They were the sons of Madri, not of Kunti/Pritha.

[483] The image is that of the senses greeting the breath of life.

[484] They were older to him.

[485] Arjuna.

[486] Nakula and Sahadeva.

[487] Krishnaa, Droupadi.

[488] Kunti.

[489] Akrura.

[490] Yudhishthira.

[491] Vijaya is Arjuna's name. After Khandava forest was burnt down, Agni gave Arjuna Gandiva, two inexhaustible quivers and a chariot with an ape on the standard.

[492] Sharabha has many meanings—young elephant, camel. It is also a mythical animal with eight legs, believed to be stronger than a lion. Gavaya is a kind of wild ox.

[493] Yudhishthira.

[494] Arjuna's name.

[495] Krishna is also one of Arjuna's names.

[496] Arjuna.

[497] One who has conquered sleep, Arjuna's name.

[498] Krishna.

[499] That is, Indraprastha.

[500] There is an obvious consistency, since we have been told Arjuna already possessed these.

[501] Maya is the architect of the asuras. Since Arjuna allowed him to escape from the fire, he built this assembly hall for Arjuna. Duryodhana took a pool of water to be the floor and fell into it. He also took the floor to be a waterbody and tripped.

[502] Krishna.

[503] In Chapter 9(24), Rajadhidevi has been mentioned as Anakadundubhi's sister. Rajadhidevi's sons have also been described as the kings of Avanti.

[504] A suitor would have to tame these seven wild bulls.

[505] Ayodhya.

[506] Brahma.

[507] Nagnajit.

[508] Viryashulka is when the maiden is offered to the suitor who shows the most valour (virya), shulka meaning price. In this case, the valour is that of taming the bulls.

[509] The image is of wooden bulls used as toys. The bulls were dragged along with ropes through their noses.

[510] Nagnajit.

[511] Strictly speaking, necklaces made out of gold coins.

[512] Chapter 9(24) states that Shrutakirti was Anankadundubhi's sister and that her sons ruled over Kekaya.

[513] Garuda.

[514] Bhouma is Narakasura. There were sixteen thousand such women. Krishna killed Narakasura and married them.

[515] Narakasura stole Varuna's umbrella, not Indra's. He stole the earrings of Aditi, the mother of the gods. He dislodged Indra from the summit of Mandara, the mountain of the immortals. Narakasura's capital was Pragjyotishapura, Kamarupa/Kamakhya near Guwahati. Why did Krishna take Satyabhama with him? This gives rise to speculative interpretations. Perhaps Indra related the misdeeds in Satyabhama's presence and she wanted to come along. Perhaps because Narakasura was the earth's son and Satyabhama was born from the earth's portion.

[516] A demon.

[517] Krishna's conch shell.

[518] Garuda.
[519] Mura.
[520] The elephants were descended from Airavata.
[521] A shataghni was a weapon that could kill one hundred at the same time and could have been a giant catapult.
[522] These are both weapons and the words are often used synonymously. However, an astra is a weapon that is hurled or released, while a shastra is held in the hand.
[523] Prachetas means Varuna. Mahamani (the great jewel) is the summit of Mandara, known as Maniparvata.
[524] Or, whose feet are like lotuses.
[525] As Brahma. The text uses the word *utkata*. Instead of powerful, this can also be translated as fierce.
[526] As Rudra.
[527] As Vishnu.
[528] Interpreted as Prakriti.
[529] Five tanmatras or subtle elements.
[530] Narakasura's son, Bhagadatta.
[531] Palanquins.
[532] Shachi.
[533] Satyabhama. There is a contradiction with what has been stated in Chapter 10(50), about Indra voluntarily parting with Parijata when Dvaraka was established.
[534] Indra.
[535] Simultaneously.
[536] Rukmini.
[537] Retreated to Dvaraka.
[538] This has a double meaning, as in devoid of qualities, or devoid of gunas.
[539] With another double meaning, of mendicants, as opposed to beggars.
[540] Which is a mere witness.
[541] He manifested four arms for the purpose.
[542] Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.
[543] Therefore, why should you want to be a king?
[544] That is, they cannot possibly suffer.
[545] Brahma.
[546] The staff is only an external manifestation of renunciation.

[547] To your devotees.
[548] Vena's son, Prithu.
[549] Bharata, the son of Rishabha and Jayanti.
[550] Yayati.
[551] In the cycle of samsara.
[552] Shiva.
[553] This is interpreted as those kings being married to such women.
[554] As Prakriti, for creation of the world.
[555] Amba, the princess of Kashi, who was in love with Shalva.
[556] Wanton or unchaste woman.
[557] This is an inconsistency. It hasn't yet happened and the story will be told in the next chapter. The marriage is of Aniruddha, Rukmini's grandson.
[558] Madra is also known as Lakshmana.
[559] Pradyumna.
[560] This adharma is about a matrimonial alliance with an enemy and not about marriages between cousins.
[561] Dantavakra.
[562] Progressively. Obviously, this means coins.
[563] Dvaraka.
[564] Aniruddha.
[565] Bali's.
[566] When she woke up.
[567] Because Pradyumna was her father-in-law.
[568] Of being a virgin.
[569] Pradyumna's.
[570] Bana.
[571] Yama.
[572] *Nagapasha*.
[573] Bana.
[574] Skanda.
[575] Beings that torment, Shiva's companions.
[576] Skanda.
[577] These are names of various divine weapons. Pashupata is Shiva's weapon, while Krishna's own weapon means Narayanastra.
[578] Wielded by Balarama.
[579] He possessed one thousand arms.

[580] Kotara should not be taken as the name of Bana's biological mother. Bana's biological mother was Ashana. This is the family deity, identified with Durga. Kotara means someone who dwells in a cave or in the hollow of a tree.

[581] Fever, this is Shiva's *jvara*.

[582] The individual soul.

[583] Prana is the breath of life or the life force.

[584] Interpreted as the Vedas.

[585] Clouds, which are created by the sun.

[586] Banasura.

[587] Prahlada.

[588] By paying a price for them.

[589] In marriage.

[590] The deadly poison that arose from the churning of the ocean. Interestingly, the word also means a lizard.

[591] Kumbhipaka is the name of a specific hell. There, sinners are baked (*pacha*) like a clay pot (*kumbha*).

[592] Balarama.

[593] Nanda and Yashoda.

[594] The first two months of spring. Respectively, Chaitra and Vaishakha.

[595] The goddess of liquor. *Varuni* was the liquor born from the churning of the ocean, accepted by the asuras.

[596] Shesha.

[597] Kanti is the goddess Lakshmi, or her manifestation. The text says the garments were not white. This is interpreted as blue, because of what follows.

[598] The kingdom normally referred to as Karusha is in Datia district of Madhya Pradesh. At that time, the king of Karusha was Dantavakra, killed by Krishna. This Karusha is actually the kingdom of Pundra, in broader Bengal, especially the northern parts. The king of Pundra called himself Poundra Vasudeva and imitated and wore all of Vasudeva's signs.

[599] In their playing.

[600] Conch shell, chakra, mace, garland of wild flowers, etc.

[601] This probably means that Krishna will hurl Poundraka's false signs away, though it is possible that in an encounter, Krishna will hurl his signs (club, chakra) towards Poundraka. In a subsequent shloka, the latter meaning seems to be intended.

[602] Poundraka was with his friend, the king of Kashi.
[603] These were imitations.
[604] Shiva/Rudra.
[605] Poundraka.
[606] A specific place inside Kashi.
[607] The fire that is towards the south. This is Shiva speaking.
[608] Magical mantras used for malevolent purposes.
[609] The feminine gender is used, *kritya* or demoness.
[610] In a wasp's nest as food.
[611] A chattering sound expressing pleasure.
[612] Of the women.
[613] The name of Balarama's club.
[614] Dvivida.
[615] Raivataka.
[616] The Yadavas.
[617] Hastinapura.
[618] Dhritarashtra.
[619] Uddhava.
[620] Gift given to a guest.
[621] All these represent royal insignia.
[622] Balarama.
[623] Krishna.
[624] Necklaces made out of gold coins.
[625] Son by extension.
[626] Hastinapura.
[627] Narada.
[628] The text uses the word Shri. In this context, it means Rukmini. Narada first entered Rukmini's residence.
[629] For whom, a brahmana is a divinity.
[630] Nevertheless, Krishna washed Narada's feet.
[631] This is interpreted as Satyabhama, but there is nothing in the text to suggest this. This was simply another one of Krishna's wives.
[632] Narada.
[633] Known as the five *mahayajna*s performed every day by a householder —offerings to gods, offerings to ancestors, tending to guests, offerings to humans and offerings to non-human species.
[634] The Ramayana and the Mahabharata.

[635] When they went off after marriage and returned thereafter.
[636] The dharma of undertaking civil works.
[637] Temples or monasteries.
[638] Famous for horses.
[639] By setting an example.
[640] The coral tree.
[641] Rukmini.
[642] Interpreted as a recital of the gayatri mantra.
[643] The word used is *badva*. This means a large number, but is also taken to be 13,084.
[644] All these are auspicious.
[645] Hunger, thirst, sorrow, delusion, old age and death.
[646] In this context, this simply means energetic dances performed by male dancers.
[647] Mridanga is a kind of drum, tala is a cymbal.
[648] Known as Rajagriha (Rajgir) now.
[649] This is the message of the imprisoned kings, being relayed by the messenger.
[650] That is, suffering from a sense of duality and not realizing unity. In broad terms, their intelligence was inferior.
[651] The apparent beneficial consequences.
[652] Brahma.
[653] A fire concealed inside kindling. Therefore, it is not surprising that Krishna should ask, though he knows.
[654] Yudhishthira.
[655] Outcasts, not outcastes.
[656] The names of the three flows of the Ganga.
[657] Instead of going to the rajasuya sacrifice, the Yadavas wanted to fight against Jarasandha and defeat him.
[658] Bhima.
[659] Brahma and Shiva respectively.
[660] About being freed from Shankhachuda, described in Chapter 10(34).
[661] The king of the elephants refers to the incident of the elephant being freed from the crocodile, Janaka's daughter means Sita in the Ramayana and Krishna's parents had been imprisoned by Kamsa.
[662] The single word in Sanskrit requires expansion. It will accomplish the good deed (cook) of freeing the kings. It will also accomplish the objective

of bringing to a fruition (cook) Jarasandha's evil deeds (what should not have been cooked).

[663] Ugrasena.

[664] The female attendants of the queens.

[665] On palanquins.

[666] Or helmets.

[667] Narada.

[668] Indraprastha.

[669] Yudhishthira.

[670] Arjuna.

[671] The text uses the word Punyashloka. Though the nuance is slightly different, the two words can be taken to be almost identical.

[672] Droupadi.

[673] Krishnaa means Droupadi. Krishna's sister means Subhadra. She was married to Arjuna, but that incident is described in Chapter 10(86).

[674] That is to say, this incident of Krishna and Arjuna burning down Khandava forest and satisfying Agni occurred at this time.

[675] Krishna.

[676] Those who do not worship you.

[677] Which grants all the objects of desire.

[678] Yudhishthira's.

[679] Arjuna.

[680] Bhima.

[681] The word used is *atithi*. An atithi is an unannounced guest, arriving unexpectedly. The householder reserves a time of the day for receiving unexpected guests.

[682] The following statements pre-empt Jarasandha from stating that he needs to know their wish first, before agreeing to it.

[683] They gave up their bodies to obtain eternal fame. Harishchandra gave up everything to pay Vishvamitra's debt. After fasting for forty-eight days, Rantideva obtained some food and water, but gave that away to those who asked for it. To protect a pigeon from a hawk, Shibi gave up his own flesh. Bali gave everything away to Vishnu in his form as the *vamana* avatara. Unchhavritti is really an adjective, not a proper noun. There are grains left after a crop has been harvested, or after grain has been milled. If one subsists on these leftovers, this is known as *unchhavritti*. Here, it is being used as proper name for Mudgala, who subsisted in this way, but gave whatever

he had to guests. When there was a hungry hunter, the pigeon gave up its body to satisfy his hunger. Seeing this, the hunter also gave up his body.

[684] By Shukracharya, Bali's preceptor.

[685] Arka is the sun-plant, actually a small tree. The imagery is probably that of arka trees being crushed when two elephants fight.

[686] Bhima.

[687] While the duel between Bhima and Jarasandha was going on.

[688] Arjuna.

[689] Jarasandha's.

[690] Koustubha.

[691] Associated with rajas.

[692] Kartavirya Arjuna.

[693] Indraprastha.

[694] Yudhishthira.

[695] Yudhishthira is referring to Krishna listening to Yudhishthira's request.

[696] Yudhishthira.

[697] Parashurama.

[698] Varuna.

[699] The day when *soma* juice is extracted.

[700] Shishupala.

[701] Sahadeva's.

[702] Shishupala and Dantavakra were first born as Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu, then as Ravana and Kumbhakarna, and finally as Shishupala and Dantavakra.

[703] Yudhishthira.

[704] The *avabhritha*. Avabhritha is the most important final component of a sacrifice, characterized by the taking of a bath.

[705] Jaya and Vijaya. This story has been stated in the Seventh Skandha.

[706] The personification of evil, as in *kali*, or in kali yuga.

[707] Such as Jarasandha.

[708] Arjuna.

[709] Yamuna.

[710] Headed towards the Yamuna.

[711] Yudhishthira.

[712] This probably means that they were on palanquins borne by male guards.

[713] The Yadavas.

[714] For want of a better word. The word used is *driti*, meaning a leather bag used for holding water or other liquids.

[715] The rajasuya sacrifice.

[716] Ritual where the performer of the sacrifice and his wife offer oblations together.

[717] Dvaraka.

[718] The inner quarters.

[719] Meaning Maya.

[720] Duryodhana.

[721] Krishna.

[722] Brahma.

[723] The guards who tried to restrain him.

[724] Yudhishthira.

[725] That is, Krishna had ensured that Duryodhana would be confounded, leading to the eventual war.

[726] Shiva.

[727] The word *pamshu* means dust. However, Pamshu is also one of Shiva's names. So perhaps this simply means that he ate a handful, after having offered it to Shiva.

[728] The word being Ashutosha, easily pleased. We have translated Ashutosha as an adjective. But Ashutosha is also one of Shiva's names.

[729] Maya. The city could fly through the sky and was known as Soubha.

[730] The three cities of the daityas, destroyed by Shiva.

[731] Pradyumna.

[732] Soubha.

[733] This world in the case of victory and the next world in the case of death.

[734] Daruka was Krishna's charioteer and Daruka's son was Pradyumna's charioteer.

[735] Pradyumna.

[736] Meaning, it continued for twenty-seven days and nights continuously, without stopping during the night.

[737] Garuda. Aruna is Garuda's older brother.

[738] That is, Shishupala.

[739] Krishna.

[740] With the body.

[741] There is no such contradiction, because Krishna was behaving like an ordinary human being.

[742] Krishna.

[743] The sun rises from behind Mount Udaya.

[744] Shalva's followers.

[745] Dantavakra.

[746] The king of Karusha, Dantavakra.

[747] Dantavakra was the son of Shrutadevi, Vasudeva's sister.

[748] Also spelt Koumadoki. The name of Krishna's club.

[749] Somanath.

[750] Prithudaka is named after King Prithu. It is believed that Vishvamitra became a *brahmarshi* in the Sarasvati temple there. This is identified as Pehowa in Karnal district.

[751] Siddhapura (Sitpur) in Gujarat.

[752] The sage Trita fell into a *kupa* (well) here, somewhere along the banks of the Sarasvati.

[753] Identified with Ramahrada, somewhere near Kurukshetra.

[754] Probably Vaishali. But there were seven (*sapta*) tributaries or different names for the Sarasvati in different places—Suprabha in Pushkara, Kanchanakshi in Naimisha, Vishala in Gaya, Manasahrada in Uttara Kosala, Suvenu in Kedara, Vimaloda in Gangadvara and Sarasvati in Kurukshetra.

[755] On the banks of the Sarasvati. It is impossible to be more specific than that.

[756] On the banks of the Sarasvati. It is impossible to be more specific than that.

[757] Vedavyasa's.

[758] Pratiloma means against the natural order and applies to progeny where the mother is superior in varna to the father. A suta has a kshatriya father and a brahmana mother.

[759] Vedavyasa.

[760] Those who pretend to follow dharma are greater sinners than those who follow adharma.

[761] Since he was visiting the tirthas. He only struck Romaharshana with the blade of grass, not intending to kill him. But destiny took over.

[762] The Puranas. Romaharshana's son was Ugrashrava.

[763] The blood made him resemble a mountain with red minerals and ores flowing out.

[764] The name of a river, Koshi in Bihar.

[765] This is believed to be Lake Manasa.

[766] *Shalagrama* is a sacred stone that is Vishnu's personification. According to legend, Vishnu promised that he would be present as this stone in the River Gandaki. River Gandaki is therefore famous for its shalagrama stones. Specifically, Pulaha's hermitage is believed to be a place known as Shalagrama, near the source of the Gandaki.

[767] Parashurama.

[768] Constructed by Rama.

[769] A kulachala is a great mountain.

[770] In Kanyakumari.

[771] The tirtha known as Phalguna is identified with Anantapur, near Bellary. Panchapsara means five (*pancha*) apsaras.

[772] Trigarta is identified as North Canara.

[773] Shiva.

[774] Arya means Parvati. Shurparaka is Sopara in Maharashtra. Shurparaka is also identified as the region near the origins of the Narmada, that is, what is the southern part of Gujarat now.

[775] Payoshni is the river Purna, while Nirvindhya is the Newaz/Newaj, in Madhya Pradesh.

[776] Reva is Narmada and Mahishmati is Maheshwar.

[777] Bhima in strength and Duryodhana in learning.

[778] Revati.

[779] Mobile and immobile.

[780] Parikshit.

[781] Interpreted as Rukmini because of the reference to Shri later.

[782] An avadhuta is an ascetic who has renounced all worldly attachments. Here, it has the sense of someone who is poor and has no worldly possessions.

[783] So far, we have not been told the brahmana's name. From Chapter 10(41), we can deduce this was Sudamna/Sudama. Krishna and Sudama studied together, in Sandipani's hermitage.

[784] We have deliberately left this as dvija, since it doesn't necessarily mean a brahmana.

[785] The father. Generally, the parents.

[786] The one through whom the investiture of the sacred thread ceremony occurs.

[787] That is, may you never forget them.

[788] This shloka is identical with 9.26 in the Bhagavad Gita.

[789] As has been mentioned earlier, Shri is Rukmini. There are interpretations about why Rukmini prevented Krishna from eating a second handful. Since they differ quite a bit, we will not get into that.

[790] One who is a brahmana only in name, worst among brahmanas.

[791] Yoga leads to eight major siddhis or powers.

[792] Literally, necklaces made out of gold coins.

[793] They got to know about it astronomically. Samantapanchaka is the area around Kurukshetra. At the time of an eclipse, it is auspicious to bathe in such a sacred place.

[794] Parashurama.

[795] Krishna's father.

[796] For protecting Dvaraka.

[797] After the eclipse was over.

[798] The brahmanas.

[799] They broke their fast.

[800] She is addressing Vasudeva, Krishna's father.

[801] Kunti is being addressed as a mother, not as Vasudeva's mother. The word used is *amba*.

[802] Dhritarashtra. Clearly, this incident occurred before the war in Kurukshetra and many other events that have been mentioned earlier.

[803] This is addressed to Ugrasena.

[804] The cessation of samsara.

[805] The word used is *sapinda*, connoting the same lineage as one's mother.

[806] Krishna's father.

[807] The foster parents.

[808] That is, Yashoda.

[809] Since these led to blinking and a pause in the vision.

[810] Such as in meditation and yoga.

[811] The elements constitute and exist in physical beings, but the elements neither constitute, nor exist, in the atman.

[812] Spiritual truth.

[813] We have kept it simple, but there are complicated interpretations. The contact with material objects creates the three states. The contact with the mind creates the three states. The three states result from sattva, rajas and

tamas. Alternatively, the three states are wakefulness, dreaming and dreamless sleep.

[814] A paramahamsa is a person who has reached the supreme state.

[815] Rukmini.

[816] Satyabhama.

[817] Not to be confused with Balarama's mother.

[818] Prasena's.

[819] Syamantaka.

[820] Akrura. Satyabhama's father was Satrajit.

[821] Jambavat.

[822] Arjuna.

[823] Chariots, elephants, horses and infantry.

[824] Krishnaa, Droupadi.

[825] Lakshmi.

[826] Arjuna's. In Droupadi's svayamvara, the artificial fish had not been completely covered.

[827] They could string the bow on one side, but not on the other.

[828] Jarasandha.

[829] Of the fish.

[830] An auspicious moment.

[831] Droupadi.

[832] Krishna.

[833] Earlier, that is the reason we are fortunate now.

[834] The other queens. This is interpreted as Rohini speaking on behalf of the other queens.

[835] Narakasura.

[836] Brahma.

[837] Gandhari.

[838] Subhadra.

[839] Parashurama.

[840] Sanaka, Sananda, Sanatana and Sanatkumara.

[841] Such as images of gods worshipped in temples.

[842] Bile, phlegm and air.

[843] Imitating human behaviour.

[844] Though you are nirguna.

[845] This is a difficult shloka to translate. A sleeping person sees various things in a dream. They seem to be real, but aren't. Reality is different.

[846] The Ganga originates there.
[847] Krishna's father.
[848] The sense is, why does he need to ask us?
[849] Krishna's.
[850] Sacrifices repay the debt to gods, studying to rishis and sons to ancestors.
[851] That is, you can cease to be a householder.
[852] Kurukshetra.
[853] Made out of golden coins.
[854] Indra.
[855] Prakrita is the primary sacrifice, vaikrita means secondary sacrifices, dravya stands for objects used/offered and jnana stands for mantras.
[856] Vasudeva.
[857] Parashurama's.
[858] Vidura.
[859] Some Yadus accompanied Nanda and his people on their return journey, perhaps to protect them.
[860] Vasudeva.
[861] This chapter is known as Shruti-Gita. The shlokas are subject to numerous and complicated interpretations and we have chosen the simplest interpretation possible. Essentially, Parikshit's question is a simple one. How can shruti texts (the Vedas and the Upanishads), which use words, be used to describe the brahman?
[862] Narayana.
[863] Rishi Narayana.
[864] This is Vishnu in his form of Aniruddha, lying down after the universal destruction.
[865] At the time of universal destruction.
[866] At the time of the next creation.
[867] Just as pots are made out of clay, but when they are destroyed, become clay again.
[868] And not on the transformations.
[869] Like the earth, you are the foundation. If the shrutis describe your transformations, they describe part of you, though not the whole.
[870] This probably means sattva, rajas and tamas, not the three worlds.
[871] Five sheaths cover the atman and are annamaya (related to food), *pranamaya* (related to energy), *manomaya* (related to the mind), *vijnana-*

maya (related to knowledge) and *anandamaya* (related to bliss).

[872] A reference to the *manipura chakra*, located above the navel and below the solar plexus. In ascending order along the spinal column, the seven chakras are *muladhara, svadhishthana,* manipura, anahata, *vishuddhi, ajna* and *sahasrara*.

[873] The cavity of the heart is *anahata chakra*. Aruni must mean Uddalaka Aruni, referred to in the Upanishads.

[874] The *kundalini* rises up the *sushumna nadi* and reaches the crown of the head (*sahasrara chakra*).

[875] Fire is latent in kindling. Fire has no form, but assumes the form of whatever it is burning.

[876] In the sacred texts.

[877] Through the rites of the sacred texts.

[878] The physical body.

[879] Brahma.

[880] Those in heaven and those who preside over the senses.

[881] Physical bodies resulting from composition of gross and subtle matter.

[882] That is, from Prakriti.

[883] The three gunas.

[884] Through the injunctions of the sacred texts.

[885] Literally, the ones who do not blink.

[886] The individual jivatmans must have an entity that is superior.

[887] The paramatman is the controller and creator of the individual jivatman.

[888] Parkriti is inert and cannot create an animate jivatman. Purusha, or its combination with Prakriti, makes Purusha subject to transformations.

[889] From different flowers.

[890] Of time, as in the past, the present and the future.

[891] The effect is not similar to the cause. For example, a son may be distinct from the father.

[892] Both means the real and the unreal. Perceptions about the real can be illusory, just as a rope can be taken to be a snake. Therefore, perceptions about the world are clouded by the illusion that shrouds that perception.

[893] Compassion, forgiveness, cleanliness, lack of jealousy, altruism, lack of greed, purity and self-control.

[894] The injunctions. These don't matter to him.

[895] Narayana.

[896] Sanandana and the others.
[897] Narada.
[898] Through the sacred texts.
[899] The mind from *vaikarika ahamkara*, the five senses of perception and the five senses of action from *taijasa ahamkara* and the five elements from *tamasa ahamkara*.
[900] Quickly (*ashu*) satisfied (*tosha*), or Ashutosha, is also one of Shiva's names.
[901] Ravana.
[902] Kedaranatha.
[903] Shiva.
[904] As a sign of assent.
[905] They have renounced violence.
[906] To samsara.
[907] A boy who is observing brahmacharya as a student, *batuka*.
[908] Made out of grass.
[909] Vrika.
[910] Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.
[911] In the original creation, water was created from fire.
[912] Both were born from Brahma.
[913] That is, Shiva does not follow the sanctioned path.
[914] Parvati.
[915] Bhrigu.
[916] This is the spot known as shrivatsa, where Shri resides.
[917] Bhrigu.
[918] That is, those who have abjured violence.
[919] The rakshasa form is based on tamas, the asura form on rajas and the sura form on sattva.
[920] Meaning Shuka.
[921] Travelling along the road of samsara.
[922] Ugrasena's.
[923] Ugrasena.
[924] They are as powerless. Arjuna is referring to the Yadavas.
[925] Shiva.
[926] Arjuna.
[927] Yama's capital.

[928] The mountain that separates the region illuminated by the sun from the region not illuminated by the sun.

[929] Himalayas.

[930] Pushti, shri and kirti respectively stand for grace, splendour and fame. Ajaya means unvanquished and stands for the powers of maya.

[931] Arjuna.

[932] Krishna and Arjuna.

[933] The various other lords, Brahma and the others.

[934] Krishna and Arjuna, one of Arjuna's names is Krishna.

[935] Signifying assent.

[936] Krishna.

[937] Yudhishthira. The 'others' means other kings.

[938] After the sporting was over.

[939] Such as the Koustubha jewel.

[940] The cuckoo is imitating those sounds.

[941] The breasts are the mountain's peaks.

[942] The rivers.

[943] Rukmavati.

[944] Aniruddha.

[945] That is, Rochana.

[946] When the Yadavas fought against each other and destroyed themselves.

[947] Ahuka is Ugrasena. It is not clear whether this means sons or attendants, probably the latter.

[948] Ganga.

[949] Of dharma.

[950] Droupadi was dragged by the hair into the assembly hall.
[951] Meaning Dvaravati.
[952] Vasudeva, Krishna's father.
[953] A tirtha near Dvaravati.
[954] Whether the child will be male or female.
[955] However, Krishna was not present.
[956] Ugrasena.
[957] The hunter's name was Jara. The word also means old age.
[958] Krishna's father.
[959] Vasudeva.
[960] There is a proportionate quid pro quo.
[961] The dharma of devotion to the illustrious one.
[962] Out of Rishabha's one hundred sons.
[963] That is, they were naked.
[964] The king of Videha.
[965] Named after Nabhi, this varsha was initially known as Ajanabha. It came to be known as Bharatavarsha later.
[966] Sanaka, Sananda, Sanatana and Sanatkumara.
[967] A kshana is a small measure of time.
[968] There is the symbolism of the shrutis and *smriti*s constituting the eyes of knowledge and of falling down into samsara.
[969] As a consequence of past karma.
[970] This echoes Bhagavad Gita 9.27.
[971] The notion of 'I', which is second, Narayana being primary.
[972] Nimi.
[973] Those who ignore Krishna.
[974] Those who hate Krishna.
[975] His interpretation of devotion is limited to worshipping the image.
[976] A very small measure of time.
[977] Nimi.
[978] Depending on their inclinations.
[979] The five senses of perception and the five senses of action add up to ten.
[980] In the form of Shesha.
[981] That is, Brahma.
[982] When the kindling has been consumed, fire enters into the principle of the fire.

[983] There is a bit of interpretation in these shlokas. A straight translation wouldn't have been clear.

[984] Tamasika ahamkara, rajasika ahamkara and sattvika ahamkara.

[985] It is left implicit that Mahat merges into Prakriti.

[986] Sattva, rajas and tamas.

[987] Nimi.

[988] Those who are attached to material objects.

[989] That is, couples who live together in the householder stage.

[990] Joy and misery, heat and cold and so on.

[991] Or bark.

[992] Mobile and immobile objects as representing Krishna.

[993] Nimi.

[994] This is a reference to the four states of consciousness—wakefulness (*jagrata*), dreaming (*svapna*), deep sleep (sushupti) and pure consciousness (*turiya*).

[995] This is a difficult shloka, with alternative interpretations. The description is as 'neti', not this.

[996] This is more than a word for word translation, since the text is cryptic. Rajas brought about the power of creation and Sutratma is the same as Hiranyagarbha. Tamas is the ignorance that envelops the jivatman.

[997] Interpreted as gods who embody knowledge, or the divinities who preside over the senses.

[998] Such as birth, youth, old age and death.

[999] Cessation of karma.

[1000] Ikshvaku's.

[1001] Karma stands for acts sanctioned by the Vedas, akarma for failure to perform those acts. Vikarma stands for the commission of prohibited acts.

[1002] The answer to the question is left implicit. The sages did not tell you, because you were not ready for the knowledge.

[1003] For instance, a child may have an illness that needs to be cured through ingesting a bitter medicine. The objective is the curing of the illness, not the medicine. Since the medicine is bitter, it is hidden inside something sweet, or the child is tempted with the offer of something sweet after the bitter medicine has been taken.

[1004] Mentioned in the Vedas.

[1005] Agamas are texts other than the Vedas, such as the tantra texts. Having obtained the preceptor's favours means having been initiated by the

guru. The devotee chooses a personal form of the lord that appeals to himself.

[1006] This is known as *anga-nyasa*, the mental appropriation (nyasa) of different limbs of the body (*anga*) to different divinities.

[1007] Such as Sudarshana chakra.

[1008] Such as Sunanda.

[1009] Padya is water to wash the feet, arghya is a gift, achamaniya is water to rinse the mouth.

[1010] Nimi.

[1011] Of perception and action.

[1012] Based on sattva.

[1013] Nara-Narayana.

[1014] Kama.

[1015] A hermitage exists so that it can offer hospitality to guests. The idea is: 'Please accept the offerings as hospitality due to a guest.' Otherwise, the hermitage becomes non-existent in a figurative sense.

[1016] The gods.

[1017] Extreme weather during the three seasons of summer, rain and winter. Extreme austerities are performed to overcome these impediments.

[1018] And other senses of perception.

[1019] And other senses of action.

[1020] As a result of rage, they utter curses and fritter the fruits away.

[1021] This literally means the mark of a cow's foot in the soil and the small puddle of water that fills up such a mark, that is, a trifle.

[1022] Narayana.

[1023] As a swan, he taught *jnana yoga* to Brahma.

[1024] Dattatreya.

[1025] Sanaka, Sananda, Sanatana and Sanatkumara.

[1026] These were the minute *valakhilya rishi*s, who fell into a goshpada and were about to drown.

[1027] There is a tense problem. This part of the text is in the future tense, which is fine because this is being told to King Nimi. However, the bit about Rama has a bit in the past tense and a bit in the present tense. The only logical conclusion possible is that this entire conversation took place while Rama was still alive.

[1028] As Buddha.

[1029] As Kalki.

[1030] Nimi.
[1031] They distort the meanings of the Vedas.
[1032] From the sacred texts.
[1033] Dharma, artha and kama.
[1034] Nimi.
[1035] A water pot.
[1036] Standing for the three Vedas.
[1037] That is, he is personified in sacrifices.
[1038] Though not mentioned by name, this seems to be addressed to Rama. In fairness, interpretations have also tried to identify this with Krishna and Chaitanya.
[1039] The word used is *pratichi*, meaning west. It is not clear whether the word is being used as an adjective or a proper noun. Given the Mahanadi's course, adjective is probably more natural.
[1040] As sanctioned by the sacred texts.
[1041] Vasudeva and Devaki.
[1042] To Dvaraka.
[1043] Since there are five senses, this is *sashtanga namaskara*, with eight (*ashta*) limbs (anga).
[1044] Vasudeva, Samkarshana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha.
[1045] Morning, noon and evening.
[1046] This is a reference to the vamana incarnation and Vishnu covering the three worlds in three strides (the three flagpoles) and the Ganga flowing (like a streamer) in the three worlds.
[1047] This is invariably interpreted as four-monthly periods of summer, monsoon and winter. But past, present and future also seems feasible.
[1048] That is, Hrishikesha.
[1049] Brahma.
[1050] On the way to Vaikuntha.
[1051] Chandra was married to the nakshatras, Daksha's daughters. But since he loved Rohini more than the others, he was cursed by Daksha.
[1052] Balarama.
[1053] Henceforth, throughout this discourse to Uddhava, the shlokas are subject to different interpretations.
[1054] Of samsara.
[1055] Intelligence, mind or senses.
[1056] There are interpretations on what is being inferred.

[1057] Thus escaping the forest conflagration.

[1058] The brahmana is identified as Dattatreya.

[1059] These have not been specifically mentioned as instructors. Both the mountain and the tree are parts of the earth.

[1060] The breath of life, that is the air, behaves in this way.

[1061] That is, he does not store food for a next meal.

[1062] He must not beg for too much of alms at any house, just as a bee collects little from every flower.

[1063] The body is the city with nine gates—the two eyes, the two nostrils, the two ears, the mouth, the genital organs and the anus.

[1064] As a possible bride.

[1065] Since she was dehusking the rice herself, they would take her to be poor.

[1066] The seating posture.

[1067] That is, secluded spots for dwelling in. There are obvious similarities with a snake's behaviour.

[1068] Like a spider.

[1069] The thread of creation, known as Mahat.

[1070] The parents by virtue of birth, worms, predatory creatures and so on after death.

[1071] There are issues of interpretation here. Yama means restraint or control and the five norms of yama are non-violence, patience, sincerity, obedience to a preceptor and purification. These are major ordinances, so to speak. Niyama stands for minor ordinances, such as fasting, visiting tirthas, donations, or acts of atonement.

[1072] These shlokas, with the argument extending across several shlokas, are extremely difficult to translate. The gist is, do agents of karma and material objects have an independent and permanent existence? The answer is no, there is no free will.

[1073] Interpreted as rituals and sacrifices.

[1074] One parardha is fifty years of Brahma's life. So two parardhas is 100 years of Brahma's life.

[1075] The word used is *tata*.

[1076] The word used for bird is *suparna*. One of these birds is the jivatman, the other is the paramatman. The jivatman eats the fruits of the pippala (the holy fig) tree, that is, enjoys the fruits of karma. The tree is a metaphor for the body.

[1077] In the sense that the cow is old and can no longer be milked again.
[1078] Without expecting the fruits.
[1079] As in worries—hunger, thirst, grief, infatuation, old age, death.
[1080] He has transcended all injunctions.
[1081] The best of the wind means the vital prana.
[1082] Like sesamum seeds and rice.
[1083] Jambavat.
[1084] Jatayu.
[1085] A merchant from Kashi, also known as Tuladhara. He taught dharma to the sage Jajali. This is a story from the Mahabharata.
[1086] This is Dharmavyadha from the Mahabharata, who taught dharma to the sage Koushika.
[1087] This is probably an allusion to the twin arjuna trees.
[1088] A specific example being Kaliya.
[1089] Akrura.
[1090] Specifically, the gopis. In general, the residents of Vraja.
[1091] There are many hidden meanings inside this shloka. For instance, the manifestation is in *muladhara chakra* and the cave is *svadhishthana chakra*. There is an implicit reference to ascending upwards, to the manipura and *vishuddha chakra*s. *Nada* is the sound of prana. Matra indicates the time taken by an akshara, svara is a vowel, varna is a letter and sthavishtha is the gross form of speech.
[1092] The two seeds are good deeds (*punya*) and bad deeds (*papa*), the roots are desires and the three stalks are sattva, rajas and tamas.
[1093] The five major branches are the five elements and the five kinds of juice are the objects of the five senses.
[1094] The eleven smaller branches are the five senses of perception, the five senses of action and the mind, the two birds are the jivatman and the paramatman and the three kinds of bark are wind, bile and phlegm.
[1095] The two fruits are joy and misery and entering the sun means going beyond samsara.
[1096] A pun indicating those addicted to vulgar pleasures.
[1097] *Hamsa*s.
[1098] The weapon of knowledge. It is no longer needed.
[1099] Brahma.
[1100] Since I am not a person who is different from you, how can you ask me the question?

[1101] By the jivatman, they are not real.

[1102] The word *daiva* is used twice, once for the present body being destroyed, the second time for a new body being obtained. Daiva can mean the result of one's past karma, destiny, or the supreme one's will. Depending on the view one takes, different permutations and combinations of meaning are possible.

[1103] The embodiment of sacrifices, Vishnu.

[1104] Satyam is truth, while ritam can be interpreted in different ways, divine truth or divine law being one.

[1105] Brahma.

[1106] Minor gods.

[1107] As in different interpretations of the Vedas.

[1108] Interpreted in the narrow sense of the rituals of the Vedas.

[1109] Brahma.

[1110] That is, as much as I love a devotee like you.

[1111] Prana draws breath into the body, *apana* exhales it. *Ayama* means control or restraint, so pranayama is control of the breath of life. Pranayama has three components—puraka, rechaka and kumbhaka. Puraka is when the inhaled apana air fills up the exhaled prana air and temporarily stops its exit. Rechaka is when the exhaled prana air stops the entry of the inhaled apana air. Kumbhaka is when prana and apana are both controlled and the air is restrained inside the body.

[1112] The major eight are bestowed by me and help to obtain me. The other ten have an origin in *sattva guna* and are for enjoying material objects.

[1113] Yoga leads to eight major siddhis or powers. These are anima (becoming as small as one desires), mahima (as large as one desires), laghima (as light as one wants), garima (as heavy as one wants), prapti (obtaining what one wants), prakamya (travelling where one wants), vashita (powers to control creatures) and ishita (obtaining divine powers).

[1114] The sentence doesn't have a noun or a verb in the Sanskrit. These are the ten minor powers.

[1115] In the list of the eight major powers, garima seems to have been replaced with kamavasiyata.

[1116] White in complexion stands for purity. The six changes are hunger, thirst, old age, death, delusion and grief.

[1117] This is the description of a person who can die whenever he wills.

[1118] Brahma.

[1119] Gayatri is a metre, as well as a mantra. The gayatri metre has three lines. The text refers to the gayatri metre indirectly, referring to it as one with lines.

[1120] That is, the fire god.

[1121] That is, Shiva.

[1122] That is, *kamadhenu*.

[1123] That is, Kubera.

[1124] Shiva.

[1125] Brahma.

[1126] That is, Sanatkumara.

[1127] Brahma divided himself into man and woman.

[1128] Shukracharya.

[1129] Vasudeva, Samkarshana, Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Narayana, Hayagriva, Varaha, Narasimha and Vamana.

[1130] Vasudeva.

[1131] Alternatively, of the elements.

[1132] Respectively related to legs, mouth, anus, hands and genital organs.

[1133] That is, one ceases to be part of samsara.

[1134] The qualification 'all men' is necessary because some may be outside the varna and ashrama fold.

[1135] The etymology of the word krita means accomplished.

[1136] As a metaphor for the four feet of dharma.

[1137] A reference to the *hotri*, *udgatri* and *adhvaryu*.

[1138] That is, there is an urge to acquire more wealth.

[1139] The sense is that they should not be washed by someone else.

[1140] From vanaprastha, one should not return to garhasthya. However, there is the clause that this progressive order is not binding on devotees.

[1141] This is interpreted in the following way. The first wife has to be from the same varna. The second wife can be from a lower varna and so on.

[1142] Shila-unchchha means subsistence on the basis of collecting grains from the ground.

[1143] There are some objects a brahmana is prohibited from trading.

[1144] That is, engage in lowly occupations, or serve inferior masters.

[1145] Svadha is for ancestors, svaha is for gods.

[1146] The sentence lacks a noun. These are tasks for all householders, referred to as *pancha yajna*, the five daily sacrifices for gods, rishis, ancestors, men and non-human creatures.

[1147] What is earned in heaven is as temporary as what is seen in this world.
[1148] Morning, noon and evening. The bath must be no more than this dip in the water.
[1149] Four fires on four sides and the sun overhead.
[1150] Darsha is on the day of the new moon, pournamasa is on the day of the full moon and chaturmasya is once every four months.
[1151] The *ahavaniya*, *garhapatya* and *dakshinagni* fires that are maintained.
[1152] A loin cloth.
[1153] To make sure he does not step on insects or other living creatures.
[1154] Outside the habitation.
[1155] Leaving a bit on the ground for other creatures.
[1156] Without leaving anything for the future.
[1157] The five senses and the mind. Alternatively, the six vices.
[1158] Avoiding condemned households.
[1159] In this context, only engaging in recommended sexual intercourse.
[1160] Interpreted in different ways—the three gunas; birth, existence and death; the three kinds of miseries.
[1161] Adhidaivika, adhibhoutika and adhyatmika.
[1162] Bhishma's.
[1163] The nine are Purusha, Prakriti, Mahat, ahamkara and the five tanmatras. The eleven are the five organs of action, the five senses of perception and the mind. The five are the five gross elements. The three are the three gunas. The one is the paramatman.
[1164] Self-control.
[1165] Prescribed practices.
[1166] Mental equilibrium.
[1167] Self-restraint.
[1168] Forbearance.
[1169] Fortitude.
[1170] Donations.
[1171] Austerities.
[1172] Heroism.
[1173] Truth.
[1174] Also a variety of truth.
[1175] Purity.
[1176] Renunciation.

[1177] Wealth.
[1178] Sacrifice.
[1179] Strength.
[1180] Fortune.
[1181] Gain.
[1182] Learning.
[1183] Modesty.
[1184] Beauty, prosperity.
[1185] Happiness.
[1186] Unhappiness.
[1187] A learned person.
[1188] A fool.
[1189] Path.
[1190] Perverse path.
[1191] Heaven.
[1192] Hell.
[1193] Relative.
[1194] House.
[1195] Wealthy.
[1196] Poor person.
[1197] A wretched person.
[1198] Controller, master.
[1199] They talk about good and bad associated with these. In an anuloma marriage, the husband has a higher varna. In a pratiloma marriage, the wife has a higher varna. Yet, you have said one should not think of good and bad.
[1200] As given in the sacred texts.
[1201] Meaning that no other means of atonement is necessary.
[1202] That is, an act, per se, is not pure/impure, good/bad, auspicious/inauspicious. The answer depends on the context.
[1203] Souvira was to the north-west and west, Kikata towards the extreme east.
[1204] Based on interpretations of the sacred texts or learned people.
[1205] Through the passage of time, the purity of an object may be affected. Size can determine the extent of contamination something suffers from contact with another object.

[1206] Time, place, substance, the one undertaking the act, mantras and the nature of the act.

[1207] For example, for people in garhasthya and sannyasa, brahmacharya may not have the same implication.

[1208] Of the sacred texts.

[1209] Because the sacrifices are a deceit. They actually love the violence.

[1210] A merchant takes a risk with existing riches in the hope of greater riches.

[1211] And about identity between the brahman and the jivatman.

[1212] Metres.

[1213] Gayatri has twenty-four aksharas, each successive metre has four aksharas more than the preceding one. Thus, anushtup has thirty-two and so on.

[1214] Those mentioned in Chapter 11(19).

[1215] Those who count twenty-five vis-à-vis those who count twenty-six.

[1216] Both urine and stool. Hence, two under excretion.

[1217] These three are thus subtracted from the list of seven principles.

[1218] Purusha cannot be subject to change.

[1219] Differentiating between the sense, the object of the sense and the presiding deity of the sense.

[1220] Such as superior birth, average birth and inferior birth.

[1221] This shloka has complicated interpretations. The idea is that the atman loses its real identity and identifies with unreal differences.

[1222] There were no kin or guests there. Nor were there any rituals.

[1223] Yakshas guard Kubera's treasure and do not enjoy it themselves.

[1224] The five who get shares in the five sacrifices a householder undertakes.

[1225] This has been described in Chapter 2(1).

[1226] Respectively associated with sattva, tamas and rajas.

[1227] The atman.

[1228] The senses and the divinities who preside over the senses.

[1229] Is karma based on the body or the atman? The experience of happiness or unhappiness can only be felt by the sentient and the body is insentient.

[1230] By Kapila and others.

[1231] At the time of destruction. At this time, there is no question of people existing. Therefore, what is meant is that only undifferentiated conscious-

ness existed.

[1232] The fruits of maya are interpreted as material existence and the jiva is reflected in this.

[1233] Sutra is an intervening stage between the gunas and Mahat.

[1234] The five senses of perception and the five senses of action.

[1235] Presiding over the ten senses and the mind.

[1236] Brahma.

[1237] Gold is the real entity for ornaments and earth is the real entity for pots.

[1238] This is a description of the process of destruction.

[1239] The text doesn't use the word sattva, it being left implicit. We have added it, as we have done for rajas and tamas, to make the meaning clear.

[1240] The pursuit of dharma is based on sattva, the pursuit of artha is based on rajas and the pursuit of kama is based on tamas.

[1241] The tasks of dharma are based on sattva, the pravritti is based on rajas and the attachment to the home is based on tamas.

[1242] Ila's son, Pururava.

[1243] Loose woman.

[1244] Fire, dogs or vultures depends on how it is disposed of after death.

[1245] Kama (desire), *krodha* (anger), *lobha* (avarice), *moha* (delusion), *mada* (arrogance) and *matsarya* (jealousy). Alternatively, the five senses and the mind.

[1246] Sages confer internal vision.

[1247] Pururava's name, one that occurs rarely.

[1248] That is, Brihaspati.

[1249] Parvati.

[1250] Karmakanda stands for ritualistic worship.

[1251] Interpreted as an image made out of earth.

[1252] The first is a physical bath. The second is a figurative bath.

[1253] Or sandalwood paste.

[1254] Avahana is invoking the deity's presence, udvasa/*visarjana* is bidding farewell.

[1255] This can be interpreted in different ways. For example, there are the twenty-five tattvas of samkhya—five tanmatras, five great elements, five senses of action, five senses of perception, the mind, *buddhi*, ahamkara, Prakriti and Purusha. These, or the respective divinities, are worshipped with the corresponding mantras.

[1256] These three vessels contain water for washing the deity's feet (padya), washing the hands (arghya) and rinsing the mouth (achamaniya).

[1257] The nine powers are *vimala* (purity), *utkarshni* (exalted state), jnana, *kriya* (activity), yoga, *prahvi* (modesty), *satya*, *ishana* (sovereignty) and *anugraha* (grace).

[1258] There are eight attendants in eight directions, with Garuda standing in front.

[1259] Ushira is the root of the fragrant grass *Andropogon muricatus*.

[1260] Svarnagharmanuvaka is from the *Taittiriya Aranyaka*, mahapurusha vidya is a specific mantra and rajana and *rouhina* are hymns from the Sama Veda.

[1261] This can mean grain of any kind. But it is specifically used for threshed and winnowed rice that has not been dehusked.

[1262] Naivedya is a general term for offerings of food. We have translated *guda* as candy made out of molasses, apupa as sweet cakes and *modaka* as dumpling. Shashkuli is a cake made out of rice or barley, supa can only be translated as soup and samyava is a kind of cake.

[1263] Interpretations explain that a sacrifice is not meant for everyone.

[1264] For the kindling.

[1265] The main mantra is *oum namo narayanaya*. The sixteen refers to the sixteen verses of the purusha sukta. After each verse, the mantra for the corresponding deity is chanted.

[1266] Yama.

[1267] The text merely states *svishti*, we have added the mantra for clarity.

[1268] Donations, constructing temples and performing worship.

[1269] Of the body.

[1270] Creation, preservation and destruction.

[1271] The sun is impartial.

[1272] Who goes through the cycle of birth and death?

[1273] There are many complicated intepretations here. Stated simply, the jivatman, in the absence of knowledge, suffers from ahamkara and goes through samsara, suffering the consequences of karma.

[1274] Wakefulness, sleeping and sushupti.

[1275] Therefore, this body does not make an existence merely because it is called a body.

[1276] In an earlier life.

[1277] Past karma, or destiny.

[1278] That karma works on him.

[1279] Yoga has eight elements—yama (restraint), niyama (rituals), asana (posture), pranayama (breathing), *pratyahara* (withdrawal), dharana (retention), *dhyana* (meditation) and samadhi (liberation). That's the reason the expression *ashtanga* (eight-formed) *yoga* is used.

[1280] Who are therefore not devoted to you.

[1281] Like those in the Ramayana.

[1282] As a preceptor outside the body and as consciousness inside the body.

[1283] Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. Alternatively, this can also be interpreted as sattva, rajas and tamas.

[1284] Krishna.

[1285] Or journeys.

[1286] Pedantically, a chandala is the son of a brahmana mother and a shudra father. A *pulkasa* (equivalently pukkasa) is the son of a *nishada* father and a shudra mother.

[1287] Dharma, artha, kama and moksha.

[1288] By kings.

[1289] A reference to the Ganga.

[1290] Sattva, rajas and tamas.

[1291] Badarikashrama.

[1292] This is the place where Krishna killed Shankhasura/Shankhachuda, now known as Bet Dwarka.

[1293] Maireya is made from molasses or grain.

[1294] Not to be confused with Subhadraa.

[1295] One of these Gadas was Krishna's brother, the other one was Krishna's son.

[1296] Krishna and Balarama.

[1297] Meaning the Yadavas.

[1298] The bit that was swallowed by the fish, mentioned in Chapter 11(1).

[1299] Suggesting that Krishna gave up his four-armed form.

[1300] Agneyi is a process used by yogis to destroy the physical body, which they then leave. In this, a process of yoga is used to make the body burst out in spontaneous flames, so that it is destroyed. However, Krishna did not use this technique.

[1301] Jara.

[1302] Krishna's father.

[1303] Such as the Bhagavat Gita.

[1304] Those who had no descendants who could perform the funeral rites.
[1305] Aniruddha's son.
[1306] In Hastinapura.

[1307] In Chapter 9(22), he has been referred to as Ripunjaya.

[1308] Pradyota established a dynasty in Avanti and was a contemporary of Bimbisara, who established the Magadhan empire (the Shishunaga dynasty), after the end of the Brihadratha dynasty.

[1309] The text does not suggest that Nandivardhana's son will be Shishunaga.

[1310] A great amount of treasure is *mahapadma* and this is thus Mahapadma Nanda.

[1311] The allusion is to Bhargava Parashurama destroying kshatriyas.

[1312] This brahmana should be Chanakya/Koutilya, but there was no question of the Nandas having trusted him. Alternatively, this brahmana might mean Rakshasa, Nanda's minister.

[1313] The name of Agnimitra's father, Pushyamitra, is missing in the text. Hence, the text mentions ten kings of the Shunga dynasty, but only names nine. Pushyamitra killed Brihadratha and established the Shunga dynasty.

[1314] While this means shudra, it also means outcast.

[1315] The text uses Bali as a proper name. Other Puranas use Bali as an adjective, meaning powerful, and state the name as Simuka.

[1316] The names listed actually fall short of thirty. But thirty is the number also cited in other Puranas.

[1317] Abhiras, Gardabhis, Kankas, Yavanas, Turushkas and Gurundas.

[1318] Or, against the Vedas.

[1319] Gangadvara usually refers to Har ki Pauri in Haridvara/Haridwar.

[1320] Outcastes, deviants from the varna system.

[1321] Compassion, forgiveness, cleanliness, lack of jealousy, altruism, lack of greed, purity and self-control are the eight potencies and the eight qualities are the eight siddhis.

[1322] Tishya is the same as Pushya.

[1323] In the constellation of the Big Dipper (part of Ursa Major), these are Pulaha and Kratu. Pulaha is Merak and Kratu is Dubhe.

[1324] This is interpreted as 1200 years of the gods, though the text doesn't explicitly state that. This is equivalent to 432,000 human years. However, the text states this clearly later.

[1325] The missing 200 years is explained as 100 between dvapara and kali and 100 between kali and krita. These are intervening periods.

[1326] These are the thoughts of foolish kings.

[1327] These are the thoughts of the kings. The five senses and the mind constitute the six.
[1328] Belonging to rival kings.
[1329] This is the earth speaking again.
[1330] Kartavirya Arjuna.
[1331] Nala.
[1332] Naraka.
[1333] Parikshit deduces that the age prevents devotion towards Krishna.
[1334] Dharma, artha and kama.
[1335] The first three Vedas.
[1336] Servants, inferior varnas.
[1337] Respectively, sisters of husbands and brothers of wives. Wives consult the former and husbands the latter.
[1338] *Kakini* or *kakinika*, equal to twenty cowries or a quarter of a *pana*.
[1339] Laya and pralaya are synonymous, meaning destruction.
[1340] Shesha.
[1341] Brahma.
[1342] Mahat, ahamkara and the five tanmatras.
[1343] The primordial matter is destroyed.
[1344] At the time of universal destruction.
[1345] There is no rain.
[1346] In these sections, we have expanded on the text a bit, so that the meaning becomes clear.
[1347] Their root cause is the brahman. However, the brahman is distinct because it continues to exist.
[1348] That is, it must be eternal and not subject to change. Anu is a small particle.
[1349] These are apparent and not real, such as the sky outside and the sky inside an enclosed space, the sun and its image reflected somewhere, and the wind outside the body and inside the body.
[1350] Since the sun evaporates water to form clouds. It is made visible by the sun's light.
[1351] The word used is atyantika.
[1352] Constant.
[1353] Brahma.
[1354] Samhita means collection. This specifically means the Bhagavata Purana. However, in Chapter 2(9), we were told Brahma recounted this to

Narada.

[1355] In interpretations, karma is the oil, the mind is the vessel, the body is the wick and the jivatman is the fire.

[1356] Since you are immersed in Vasudeva.

[1357] And other senses.

[1358] Kashyapa. Kashyapa was capable of countering poison. Therefore, Takshaka dissuaded Kashyapa from going to Parikshit.

[1359] There are different types of karma. Arabdha karma is that karma which has matured and is ready to yield fruit.

[1360] Brihaspati.

[1361] There are four shlokas here, subject to differing interpretations.

[1362] Sattva, rajas and tamas.

[1363] Of everything—material objects, the senses, the objects of the senses, the mind, ahamkara.

[1364] Vaishampayana, Jaimini, Sumantu, Shuka.

[1365] When the ears are covered.

[1366] Respectively, the elements constituting the body, the activities performed and the agent who performs action. By not returning, what is meant is that they don't return to samsara.

[1367] This can mean either Brahma, or the brahman.

[1368] Omkara.

[1369] The three gunas are sattva, rajas and tamas, the three names are Rig Veda, Sama Veda and Atharva Veda, the three objectives are *bhur, bhuvah* and *svah,* and the three kinds of consciousness are wakefulness, sleep and deep sleep.

[1370] Brahma.

[1371] Vyahriti means the words bhuh, bhuvah and svah, uttered after Oum.

[1372] There are four types of officiating priests—*hotar* (one who recites from the Rig Veda), *udgatar* (one who recites from the Sama Veda), adhvaryu (one who recites from the Yajur Veda) and brahman (one who recites from the Atharva Veda). This brahman is not to be confused with the supreme soul (brahman or paramatman).

[1373] Maharshis known as Vedavyasa (or Vyasadeva) classified the Vedas into different branches. There is an inconsistency though. This should read at the end of every dvapara yuga, not at the beginning of every dvapara yuga.

[1374] This is the Rig Veda, known as bahvrich because it had the most number of mantras.

[1375] Atharva Veda.

[1376] Etymological dictionary, explaining the words used in the Vedas.

[1377] Bashkala's son.

[1378] Vaishampayana was taught the Yajur Veda and adhvaryus are priests who recite verses from the Yajur Veda. Charakadhvaryus means Charakas who became adhvaryus or adhvaryus who were known as Charakas. Charakas are those who undertake specific vows.

[1379] Vaishampayana did not actually kill a brahmana. There was a sacrifice and it was decreed that anyone who absented himself from this sacrifice would perform a sin that was tantamount to that from killing a brahmana. Because he had to perform his father's funeral ceremony, Vaishampayana couldn't be present and incurred the sin. Yajnavalkya offered to atone for it alone.

[1380] Yajnavalkya.

[1381] Pheasants.

[1382] Morning, noon and evening.

[1383] Literally, from the mane of a horse.

[1384] Jaimini. At least, that is what the text seems to suggest. But it might also mean Sumantu.

[1385] Literally, resident of Avanti.

[1386] From the Vishnu Purana, it is known that this disciple's name was Kabandha.

[1387] Romaharshana.

[1388] Parashurama's.

[1389] These characteristics are known as the *lakshana* of a Purana. Sarga is subtle creation, visarga is gross destruction, vritti is sustenance, raksha is protection, antara means the manvantaras, vamsha is lineage (usually of gods and rishis), vamshanucharita is lineage and conduct (of kings), samstha is destruction, hetu is cause (for karma) and apashraya is refuge (the ultimate one).

[1390] An allusion to karma.

[1391] The three Vedas.

[1392] Indra.

[1393] The past, the present and the future.

[1394] Like the clay in an earthen pot.

[1395] Wakefulness, sleep and sushupti.

[1396] Since Bhavishya Purana has been included, Vayu Purana is missing from the list.

[1397] Vedavyasa.

[1398] These are things people say about Markandeya.

[1399] Meaning a large number of years.

[1400] Kama's arrow has five heads, each head standing for one of the senses.

[1401] An apsara.

[1402] Markandeya's.

[1403] So that the insects are not harmed or killed.

[1404] The two are interpreted as Brahma and Shiva, but might mean rajas and tamas too.

[1405] These were objects he thought of in his mind, not physical offerings.

[1406] The entire universe was inside the stomach, exactly as it had been before the destruction and deluge.

[1407] The same as Pushpabhadra.

[1408] That is, a godless person.

[1409] Shiva.

[1410] Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.

[1411] The three Vedas.

[1412] Sharva's consort, Uma.

[1413] Past, present and future.

[1414] Markandeya Purana.

[1415] Markandeya's.

[1416] This requires explanation. The illustrious one's atman creates the maya of samsara. Some ignorant people compare Markandeya's experience with this and suggest it was all maya, and not real. But Markandeya actually experienced it.

[1417] There are diverse interpretations of this. For instance, the nine principles are Prakriti, Mahat, sutra (the active principle of Mahat), ahamkara and the five tanmatras. The transformations are the ten senses, the mind and the five gross elements.

[1418] O, U and M, making up Oum.

[1419] Brahma.

[1420] Prakriti.

[1421] The others are vairagya and so on.

[1422] Mudras are the positions and gestures of the fingers and the hands, such as one that confers boons (*barada*) and one that grants freedom from fear (*abhaya*).

[1423] In this context, the word bhaga means potency and Bhagavan is one with these potencies. The relevant potencies are rulership, virtue, glory, affluence, wisdom and non-attachment.

[1424] Garuda.

[1425] Intepreted as the pancharatra texts.

[1426] Vishva is the state of wakefulness, guiding the functioning of external objects (artha) and the divinity is Pradyumna; taijasa is the state of dreaming, guiding the functioning of the senses (*indriya*) and the divinity is Samkarshana; prajna is the state of dreamless and deep sleep, guiding the functioning of the mind (*manas*) and the divinity is Aniruddha; turiya is the state of transcental self-realization (jnana) and the divinity is Vasudeva.

[1427] This Krishna means Arjuna.

[1428] Chaitra.

[1429] Dhata is the form of Surya, Kritasthali is the apsara, Heti is the rakshasa, Vasuki is the naga, Rathakrit is the yaksha, Pulastya is the rishi and Tumburu is the gandharava. For the other eleven months, this exact order is followed. Therefore, there is no need to add additional notes.

[1430] Vaishakha.

[1431] Jyeshtha.

[1432] Ashadha.

[1433] Shravana.

[1434] Bhadrapada.

[1435] Magha.

[1436] Phalguna.

[1437] Margashirsha.

[1438] Pousha.

[1439] Ashvina.

[1440] Kartika.

[1441] Act of giving up one's life by fasting to death.

[1442] Vidura.

[1443] Vritra.

[1444] By Vedavyasa.

[1445] Shridhara, the one who holds Shri, is Vishnu's name.

[1446] In other Puranas.

[1447] Purusha, Prakriti, Mahat, ahamkara and the five tanmatras.
[1448] Referred to as Suparna in the text.
[1449] The word used is Ka.
[1450] Vedavyasa.
[1451] Shuka.
[1452] That is, Vishnurata or Parikshit.

Acknowledgements

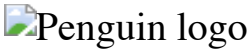
The corpus of the Puranas is immense, in scope, as well as in length. Taken together, the eighteen Puranas are four times the size of the Mahabharata. If the prospect of translating the Mahabharata seemed challenging, the task of translating the Puranas was/is downright disconcerting and intimidating. After the Mahabharata, the Harivamsha and the Valmiki Ramayana, it was a natural transition, the obvious thing to do. However, it seemed to be an impossible task. Did one dare to start? If so, where? Since there was no 'Critical Edition' of the Puranas, what text should one use? I have now come to believe what should be obvious. Everything one does is determined by destiny. One is merely an instrument, implementing someone else's will. Thus, destiny intervened. It first intervened in the form of my dear friend, Professor Ramesh Kumar Pandey, vice chancellor, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha. He suggested, in the absence of Critical Editions, one should use the Nirnaya Sagar texts. They have much greater acceptance than other versions. In addition, urging me along the road, he gifted me the Nirnaya Sagar texts of eleven of the eighteen Mahapuranas.

That still left a question unanswered. Which Purana should one start with? Destiny intervened yet again, in the form of another friend, Shri Yudhistir Govinda Das of ISKCON. For some time, Yudhistir had been urging us to visit Mayapur. That visit, pending for quite some time, materialized so that it synchronized with the annual Gaura Purnima festival. What better time to visit Mayapur? Yudhistir also gifted us a set of Prabhupada's translation of the Bhagavata Purana. This determined the answer to the question. The Bhagavata Purana it would have to be. One does indeed deplore the general ignorance about the treasure trove the Puranas are. The dumbed down versions one usually sees or reads are pale shadows of what these

texts actually contain. Having said this, the Purana that most people are familiar with is probably the Bhagavata Purana. Therefore, the Bhagavata Purana was a good choice. As a token of appreciation, these three volumes are dedicated to Yudhistir Govinda Das. As Yudhistir well knows, this is nothing more than a token. Dedications are meant for the one who is beyond either of us.

All these translations, ever since the Bhagavad Gita in 2006, have been published by Penguin India. I am indebted to Penguin for believing in the utility of not just the Bhagavata Purana translation, but the entire Purana Project, which still seems to stretch into the interminable horizon of the future. But one step at a time. For the record, with the Bhagavata Purana published, I am now translating Markandeya Purana, the next one in the series. In particular, Meru Gokhale and Ambar Sahil Chatterjee at Penguin India have been exceptionally patient, persevering and encouraging. But for them, the Purana Project might not have taken off. Paloma Dutta has been the editor since the days of the Mahabharata translation. That makes life a whole lot easier. She knows my style and I know hers. There is a Paloma hand in the product, even though it won't be detected and isn't meant to be.

ययोरात्मसमं वित्तं जन्मैश्वर्याकृतिभवः। तयोर्विवाहो मैत्री च नोत्तमाधमयोः क्वचित । (10.60.15) Ever since this translation journey started in 2006, my wife, Suparna Banerjee (Debroy) has been a constant source of support, ensuring the conducive and propitious environment required for the work to continue unimpeded. She has been much more than that. (She was with me in Mayapur too.) In a rich language like Sanskrit, I can think of close to twenty words—all capturing the different nuances of 'wife'. Suparna has been all these and more. अनुकूलकलत्रे यस्तस्य स्वर्ग इहैव हि । प्रतिकूलकलत्रस्य नरको नात्र संशय :।। This too is destiny.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